NATURAL BORN HUNTER

INTERVIEW: ABBIE BERNSTEIN

With her fearless nature and ability to pack a punch, Jo Harvelle proved herself a worthy ally of the Winchester brothers in *Supernatural's* second season – even if she did get the three of them in a whole heap of trouble on more than one occasion. Actress ALONA TAL chats about her formidable alter ego...

INTERVIEW
ALONA TAL

Smite Jo Harvelle at your peril. Do so, and you're likely to get a dressing down sharp enough to make your eyes water. And, if your name's Dean Winchester, a punch in the face to boot. With hunter blood pumping through her veins (courtesy of her father, William Anthony Harvelle) and a way with a weapon even Bobby Singer can't help but admire, this is a woman to be reckoned with.

At least, that's the impression we're given the first time we meet Jo at Harvelle's Roadhouse in the second season episode *Everybody Loves A Clown*. On her own turf, Jo is a formidable character, more than holding her own with the assortment of hunters and drunks that pass through the Roadhouse's well-worn doors. As the season progresses, however, it soon becomes clear that for all her bravado, Jo lacks experience in the field, something her protective mother Ellen never lets her – or the Winchester brothers – forget.

For Israeli actress Alona Tal, it's Jo's weaknesses, as well as her strengths, that make the character so enjoyable to play. Here, the pretty 24-year-old recalls the fun she had making those season two episodes and reveals what she's been up to since we last saw Jo in *Born Under A Bad Sign*...

The Official Supernatural Magazine: When we first meet Jo she's one tough cookie. Was that how you saw the character as well?

Alona Tal: When I did the first episode, I thought Jo was very experienced, and I thought she was a hunter – I suppose because of the way they introduced her with the guns and everything. It turned out later that she wasn't that experienced, and I had to rework what I had initially thought. For my part, I think it was more interesting to watch Jo go through that first hunt, as opposed to her already being this badass girl.

As an actress, do you prefer knowing everything about your character up front, or do you enjoy finding things out as you go along?

That's a tricky question. I don't know. I like knowing the secrets, but sometimes after I find them out I wish I didn't. Sometimes it's better not to know, because then you don't put too much into the performance other than what the character wants to project at that moment.

The last time we saw Jo was in the second season episode *Born Under A Bad Sign*. You've since taken a regular role on the CBS drama *Cane*. Does this mean we've seen the last of Jo Harvelle?

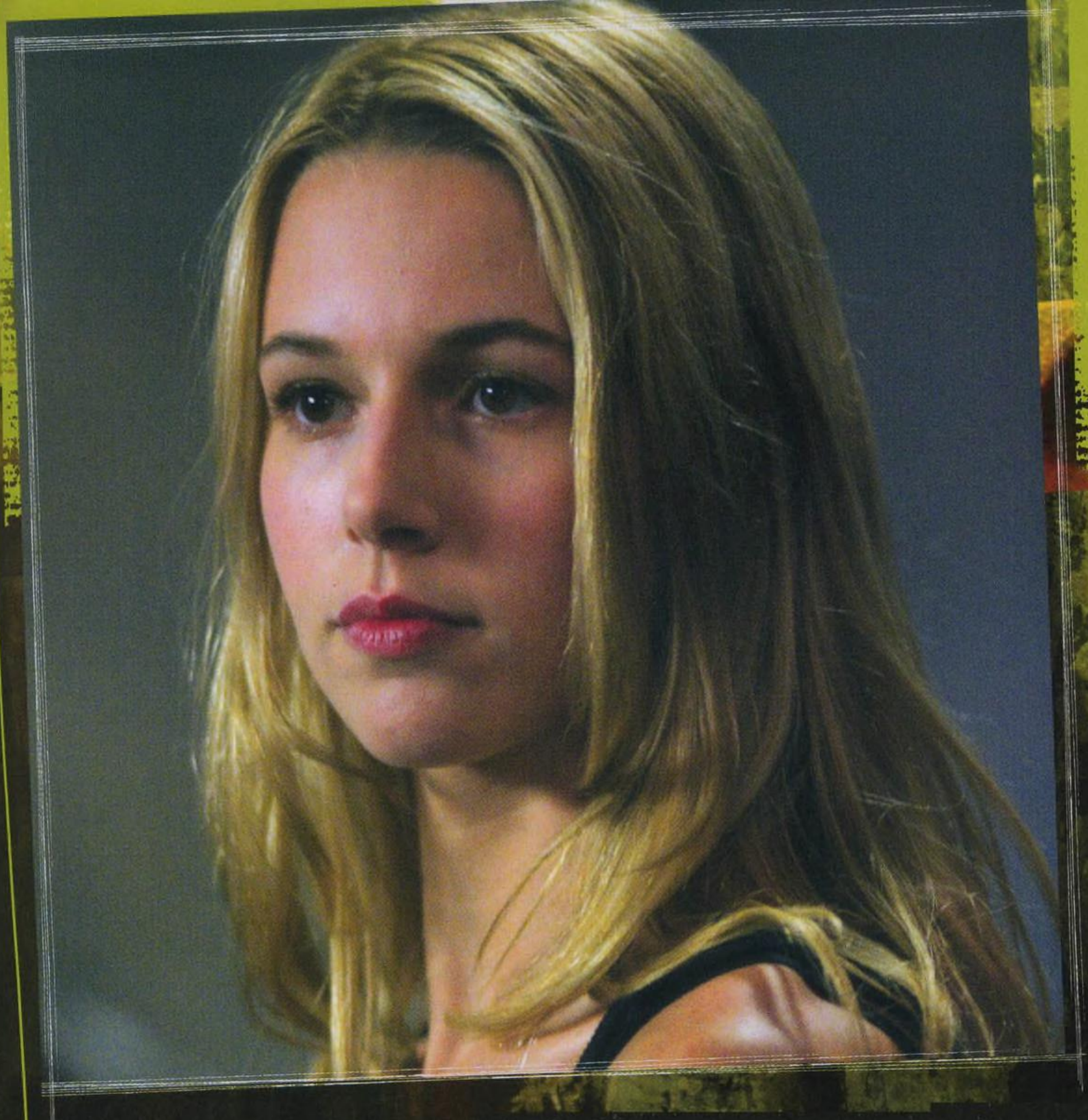
I don't know! Anything is possible on *Supernatural*.

What can you tell us about *Cane*? We know it's a drama about a family running a rum business...

Jimmy Smits plays Alex Vega, and Michael Trevino plays his son Jaime. I play Jaime's girlfriend. There are some dirty things happening. I don't take part in them at the moment, but you never know... I'm not fighting any demons at this point, though!

You were born in Israel and lived most of your life there. What brought you to North America?

I read somewhere that somebody said I came here for higher-paying jobs. That's not true. I came here because it's everybody's dream – this is the capital, this is the actor's or the artist's Mecca. I'm an actress, this is where I wanted to go. Don't get me wrong – Israel has wonderful art, wonderful filmmaking, and wonderful television. It's just that I had



TAL ORDER

Love Alona Tal? Here's the other shows that you can catch her in...

Cane (as Rebecca)
New CBS drama about the trials and tribulations of a family attempting to run a rum business.

Half Past Dead 2 (as Ellie)
Explosive sequel to the 2002 actioner.

Taking 5 (as Devon)
A boy band is kidnapped by two geeky teenagers.

Split Decision (as Bex Christensen)
Sliding Doors-style shenanigans as a teenage girl transfers to a new high school. Which path will she choose?

Veronica Mars (as Meg Manning)
Long-running crime drama about a young girl solving mysteries in her affluent hometown.

to figure that little bug, the desire to work in the American film/TV industry out for myself. Was it just a dream or could it actually be attainable? So I gave it a shot...

How does the TV industry differ in America compared with Israel?
Here and in Canada, it's very similar – the filmmaking is very similar. I think it's a lot of the same companies doing it. In Israel, the main difference is that there's less money in the actual financing of the production, so that's where you see the difference. But the quality and the dedication and the passion is the same, if not sometimes even more, because people do it for less and in much harder conditions.

If we have seen the last of Jo Harvelle, what will you miss most about *Supernatural*?
It was so much fun. I don't understand why every show doesn't have me running around hitting things over the head. I really don't get that...

"I THINK IT WAS MORE INTERESTING TO WATCH JO GO THROUGH THAT FIRST HUNT, AS OPPOSED TO HER ALREADY BEING THIS BADASS GIRL."

TURN OVER THE PAGE FOR A FRAME-BY-FRAME ANALYSIS OF JO'S FIRST EPISODE, EVERYBODY LOVES A CLOWN.

INTERVIEW
STERLING
K. BROWN

Killer Instinct

Interview: Bryan Cairns

Until his brutal death in season three's *Fresh Blood*, Gordon Walker was a constant thorn in the side of the Winchester brothers. In an exclusive interview with *The Official Supernatural Magazine*, actor STERLING K. BROWN chats about the demons that drove this most vicious of hunters...

Three words aptly describe Gordon Walker. Mad. Bad. Dangerous. Ever since his sister was turned into a vampire when he was just 17, Walker has been hell-bent on destroying every supernatural being unlucky enough to cross his path – even the ones that *aren't* evil. As Ellen Harvelle warns Sam in the season two episode, *Bloodlust*, Gordon is a danger "to everyone and everything around him," especially those of the bloodthirsty persuasion. How ironic then that this seasoned hunter should become the very thing he hates most in season three's *Fresh Blood.* Then again, you'd expect nothing less from *Supernatural*...

The Official Supernatural Magazine caught up with Gordon Walker's considerably less scary alter ego, Sterling K. Brown, to get his thoughts on this most dramatic of twists...

The Official Supernatural Magazine: How did you become involved with *Supernatural*?

Sterling K. Brown: I had a producer session with several people. I don't think they knew which way they wanted to go with the character, because all

INTERVIEW
STERLING
K. BROWN

ethnicities were present for the casting. The audition script was Gordon recounting the story of how he first became a hunter, and his sister's death. It was just Robert Singer and Eric Kripke in the audition. They seemed as if they were relatively pleased, but there's no telling what's going to happen until you sign the contract. I do remember thinking that of all the auditions I'd had recently, this was one of the best written. I was excited about the material.

Describe Gordon Walker...

He's an intense individual who passionately believes he knows what is best for the world and humanity. I would never describe him as a bad person. He has a certain myopia that doesn't allow him to see anything other than the perspective he's created.

Gordon's storyline largely involved vampires. Are you a fan of that genre?

Anybody around my age who grew up watching *The Lost Boys* has to be psyched about being involved with something of this nature. I geeked out about the whole thing. Before my first episode, *Bloodlust*, I watched a lot of supernatural movies, like *Dracula*. I came to the conclusion that the idea of there being a good vampire didn't jive with me, or Gordon, which is good. I thought it was complete and total bull. So when I said there is no such thing as a good vampire, I really meant it! The flip side of that is when I shot my final episode, the idea of having to become a vampire myself [see *Fresh Blood* question]... I hated it, hated it, hated it! I have so much bile for vampires!

In *Bloodlust*, Gordon initially seems to find a kindred spirit in Dean. Why did they connect so well?

They both relish kicking ass. They are both haunted, too. As a big brother, Dean has a certain level of responsibility that he takes on for Sam. Gordon doesn't have a sibling, but because of the death of his sister, he has a responsibility to make sure he is able to do as much good as possible and even the score.

"I WOULD NEVER DESCRIBE GORDON AS A BAD PERSON. HE HAS A CERTAIN MYOPIA THAT DOESN'T ALLOW HIM TO SEE ANYTHING OTHER THAN THE PERSPECTIVE HE'S CREATED."

STERLING PERFORMANCE(S)

Can't get enough of Mr. Brown? Then check out the following...

Army Wives (Roland Burton)
Sterling plays the psychiatrist husband of Lieutenant Colonel Joan Burton in this powerful drama series.

Starved (Adam Williams)
Comedy starring Sterling as a bulimic New York cop.

Third Watch (Officer Dade)
Drama series set in and around a fictional New York City precinct. Sterling guest-starred for four episodes as Officer Edward Dade.

We've been introduced to a lot of hunters, so how are Gordon's methods different to that of the Winchesters?
That's a good question. I feel that Sam is the tempering partner that keeps Dean from moving forward in a similar fashion to Gordon. The brothers have two brains working together, which is always going to give you a system of checks and balances that wouldn't exist otherwise. Gordon only has an impulse and goes with that.

Dean called Gordon a "sadistic bastard." Do you feel he crossed the line when he tortured the vampire queen Lenore?
Absolutely not! I don't think there is any such thing as a good vampire! The idea of a whole nest of vampires going around feeding only on cow's blood sounds like complete crap to me.

Even though Gordon clashes with the Winchesters, does he have some strange code of honor?
Absolutely! When Gordon turns his aim toward Sam, it is not because he developed some sort of animosity from the way the brothers left him the last time they saw Gordon. He has information that leads him to believe Sam will become an instrument of evil in Satan's army, period! His whole motivation is to eradicate evil from the world. He does his best to explain that to Dean, and I know it was hard for Dean to hear because Sam is his brother.

What was your opinion of the way Dean and Sam framed Gordon and had him arrested?
My whole philosophy was any time you don't die, there is always an opportunity to come back. I was happy to be arrested and not shot in the head! It was playful and witty. You have to give Sam credit; he's a Stanford man, even though he didn't finish his education.

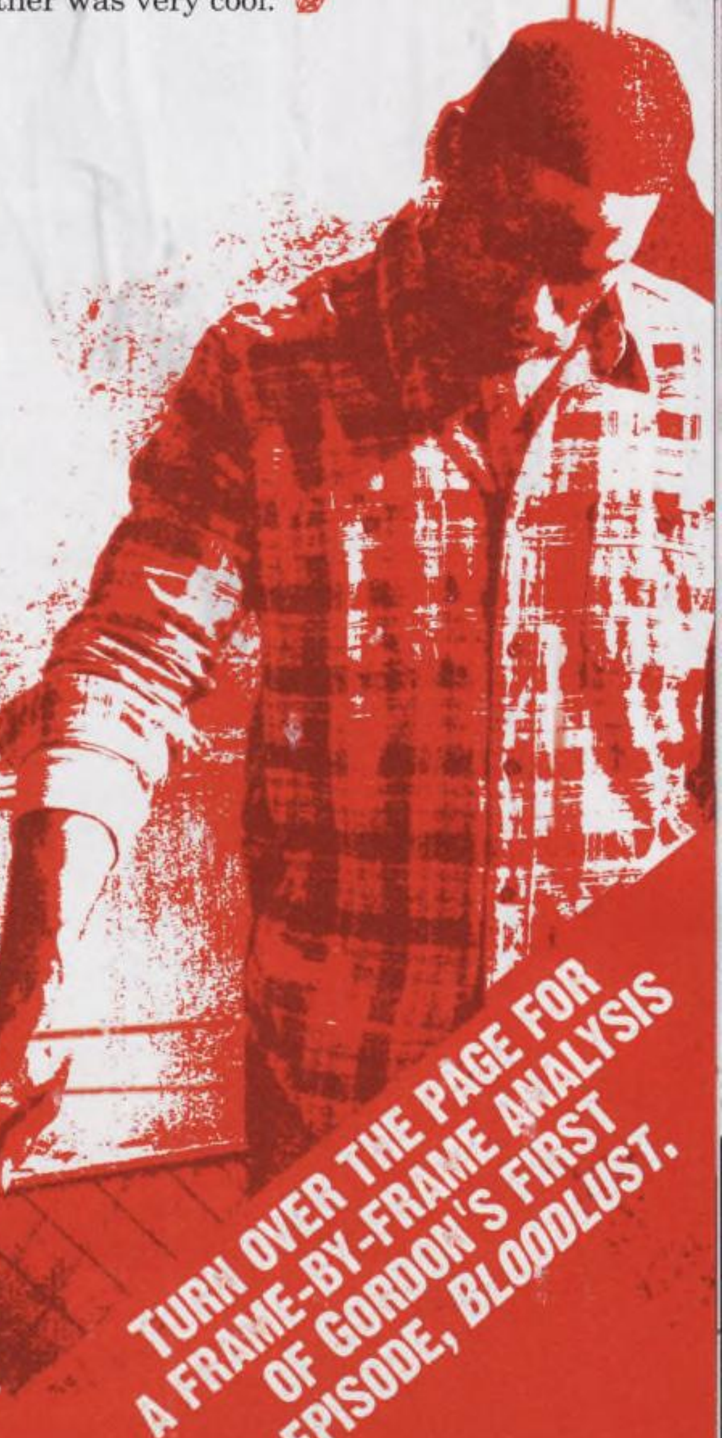
In season three's *Fresh Blood*, Gordon is transformed into a vampire. How did that sit with you?
That was really hard. I called Eric Kripke when I first got the script and realized I was going to be expiring. I wasn't so bummed about expiring, because all good things must come to an end. The thing that was horrific for me is that Gordon turns an innocent girl into a vampire. That was hard because his sister was turned and he had to take her out. That began his career as a hunter. So I know Gordon does a lot of jack things and isn't the most righteous individual, but did he have to do this? Eric was like, "We talked about it for a long time, but now that he's a monster and operates off instinct, he is not so logical." When the bloodlust comes on and you have the desire to feed, it is *huge*, and your strategy does not take into consideration collateral damage. His endgame is to kill Sam, and anyone else who has to experience detrimental effects because of that is not a concern of his. That was tough for me to process and get on board with.

It is ironic that Gordon becomes what he hates most?
Yeah, it is very ironic, and he gets the chance to talk about that a little bit, having the understanding of what it means to carry around something evil inside of you. He even says, "I am going to take myself out once I take you out because it is the right thing to do."

Were you satisfied with the way it ended for Gordon?
He definitely didn't go out with a whimper; it was with a bang for sure. If he had to go out, I am glad it will leave a lasting impression on the series.

Did you enjoy working with Jared and Jensen?
The guys did everything in their power to make me feel comfortable and like I belonged on the set. I will always be thankful to them for that. I feel the atmosphere of any set is established by the leads, and Jared and Jensen create a wonderfully productive environment that is also extremely playful at the same time. I learned a lot of what it means to be gracious by the example they put forth.

Finally, what are your Gordon Walker highlights?
I loved that first fight with Dean, and then Gordon's confrontation with the boys leading up to when he tortures the vampire queen with the dead man's blood. I felt like that was the first time Sam and Dean see what kind of man Gordon is, and how he likes to do things. Then in *Hunted*, the way Dean and I got to interact with each other was very cool.

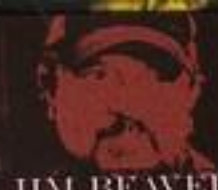


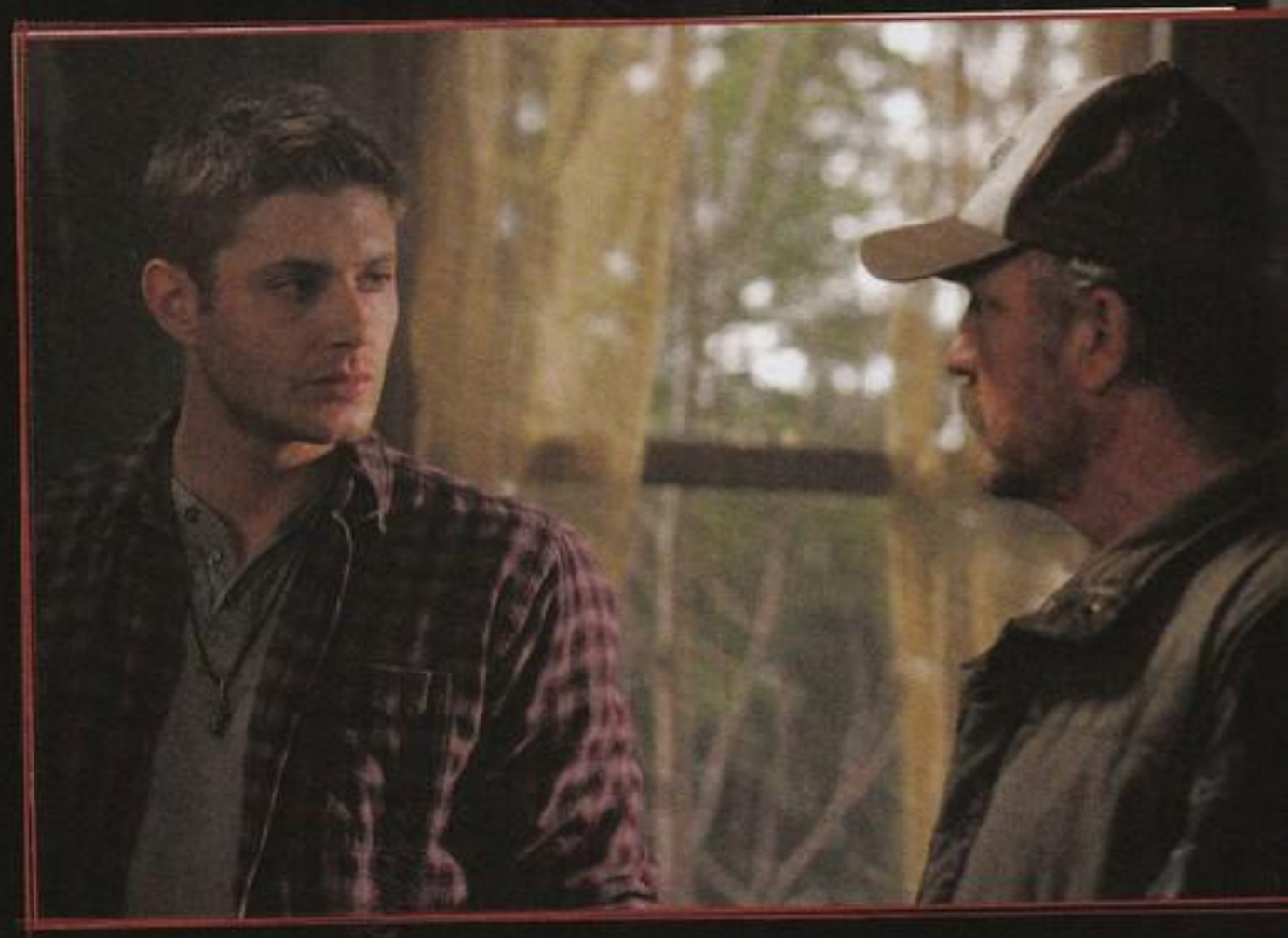
TURN OVER THE PAGE FOR A FRAME-BY-FRAME ANALYSIS OF GORDON'S FIRST EPISODE, BLOODLUST.

ON A SHOW KNOWN FOR KILLING OFF ITS GREAT GUEST CHARACTERS, JIM BEAVER'S BOBBY SINGER HAS THANKFULLY PROVEN THE EXCEPTION TO THE RULE. *THE OFFICIAL SUPERNATURAL MAGAZINE* TALKS WITH BEAVER ABOUT WHAT MAKES BOBBY THE TYPE OF RECURRING CHARACTER FANS WANT TO SEE SURVIVE TO THE SERIES' FINALE...

UNCLE BOBBY

Words: Nicholas Knight





Ever since they were kids, "Uncle Bobby" Singer has been an important figure in the Winchester brothers' lives, even providing Dean's famous amulet necklace. Since their father John's death, Bobby's arguably taken on an even deeper role as a kind of surrogate dad, always on hand with his worldly wisdom and supernatural know-how.

Bobby – and the actor who plays him – the multi-talented Jim Beaver, have become favorites with *Supernatural* fans, too. The busy Beaver found some time to talk to *The Official Supernatural Magazine* about playing Bobby between filming season four's *Sex And Violence* and his new show, *Harper's Island*...

***The Official Supernatural Magazine*: How would you say the character Bobby has changed over the course of the series?**

Jim Beaver: I don't think Bobby's changed so much as he's been further revealed [to the audience]. I don't see anything in his current status that seems different or contradictory to the Bobby we first saw in *Devil's Trap*. We've learned things about him, but that's not the same as Bobby changing. We know he didn't get into hunting as a hobby, and that he has deep feelings for Sam and Dean. The latter is certainly character development to an extent, but I don't think of it as a real change – just a deepening of something that was always there.

How has Bobby's relationship with Sam and Dean changed or grown?

Well, he's certainly more of a surrogate father to them now, as he's been working and interacting with them closely for some time, and, in the absence of John, has a place he can fill in their lives. They, too, are filling a hole in Bobby's life, I think.

Has your approach to portraying the character changed at all?

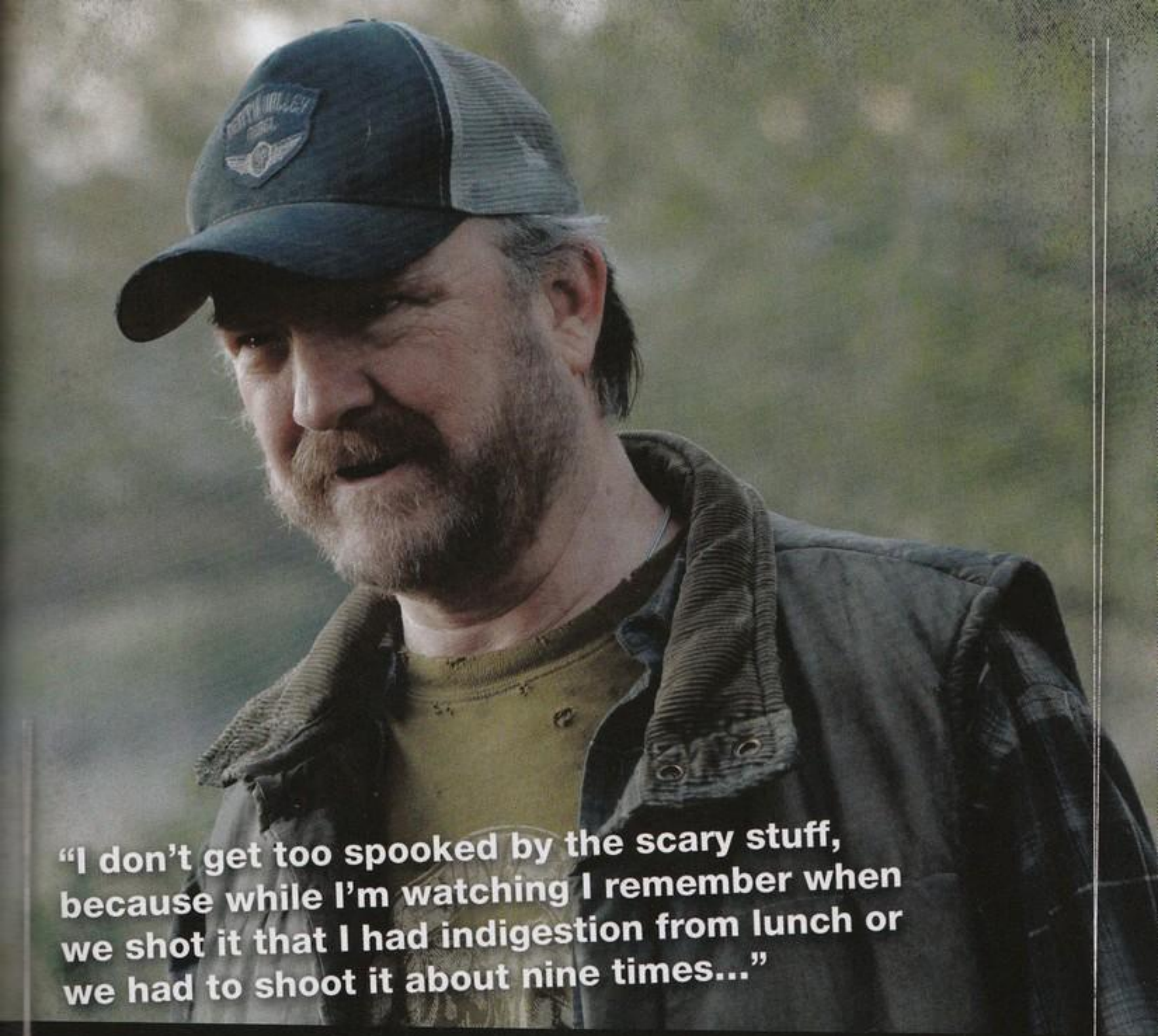
Not a bit. My approach has always been to say the lines the best I can. I felt from the beginning, even before much of the character had been revealed, that there was an affection for Sam and Dean on Bobby's part. That's come out more in the writing, and thus in my playing, but there's no shift in my approach.

In *The Magnificent Seven*, there's a brief scene where Bobby gets all cleaned up and wears a suit. Are you more comfortable dressing like Bobby normally does, or do you prefer suits?

Middle ground, please! I don't like wearing clothes as dirty as Bobby's, but nine times out of 10, I'm at home in jeans, a T-shirt and a baseball cap. But I like to dress up on occasion, just to remind folks I can. I know some actors don't like having to get all dressed up for premieres and things like that, but I can't imagine walking a red carpet in less than a tux, if that's the order of the day.

In *Dream A Little Dream Of Me*, we learned about why Bobby became a hunter. Prior to that, had you developed Bobby's back-story at all in your mind?

I had not developed my own back-story for Bobby. I do that sometimes for characters, especially characters that have big unanswered questions about them. But Bobby was, initially, just a guest-starring role for me – no future, no past outside of what was on the page in that episode. Every episode since then has provided a little more depth, but I've never come up with my own ideas. My feeling is that with the way the writers slowly dole out bits of Bobby's past, anything I made up for myself might end up contradicting something they want to do, so I rely on them. I'm not one of those actors who needs to know where a fellow went to grade school before I can play him. Every actor is different, and every actor approaches the work differently. If it works, then that's all that counts.



"I don't get too spooked by the scary stuff, because while I'm watching I remember when we shot it that I had indigestion from lunch or we had to shoot it about nine times..."

The episode *Are You There, God...? It's Me, Dean Winchester* revealed that Bobby had failed to save two little girls from a monster. Bobby has always come across as someone who knows a lot about hunting, someone who the boys regularly turn to for help, so was it at all strange portraying Bobby as someone who's just as infallible as the next hunter?
Not at all. It's what [actors] look for when we're playing a character – the strengths, the weaknesses, the mistakes, the successes – it's all what makes a rounded character. Who would want to watch Bobby if he never failed, if he had nothing whatsoever wrong with him or any weaknesses? It's those things that make him human. If anything, I thought it was about time!

Also in that episode, we learn that Bobby has a supernatural "panic room" – would you say that's something he did simply as a preventative measure, or was it in reaction to a past "home invasion?"
I think Bobby was probably a good Boy Scout: "Be prepared," you know?

Looking back, how did you react when you found out that Dean was actually going to Hell?
I thought, "Good! The writers aren't going with the cliché of the cavalry riding in at the last minute to save the day."

You were in one episode in season one, five episodes in season two, and seven episodes in season three. Do you expect your episode count to keep increasing? How does your role on *Harper's Island* affect your ability to appear on *Supernatural*?
Unless there's a change in plans, I don't expect to be in more than six episodes in season four. I'd be surprised if more than that happened. Much of that slight decrease is surely due to *Harper's Island*, which consumed a great deal of my time this past fall.

What can you tell us about *Harper's Island* and your work on it?
I can't say much about *Harper's Island*, because there is the biggest veil of secrecy over this project of anything I've ever worked on. It's going to be a thrill ride for the audience, I think, and CBS seems very happy with it. They've given us the best timeslot on their schedule, Thursdays, right after *CSI*. (Right after *Supernatural*, too!)

"I think Bobby was probably a good Boy Scout: 'Be prepared,' you know?"

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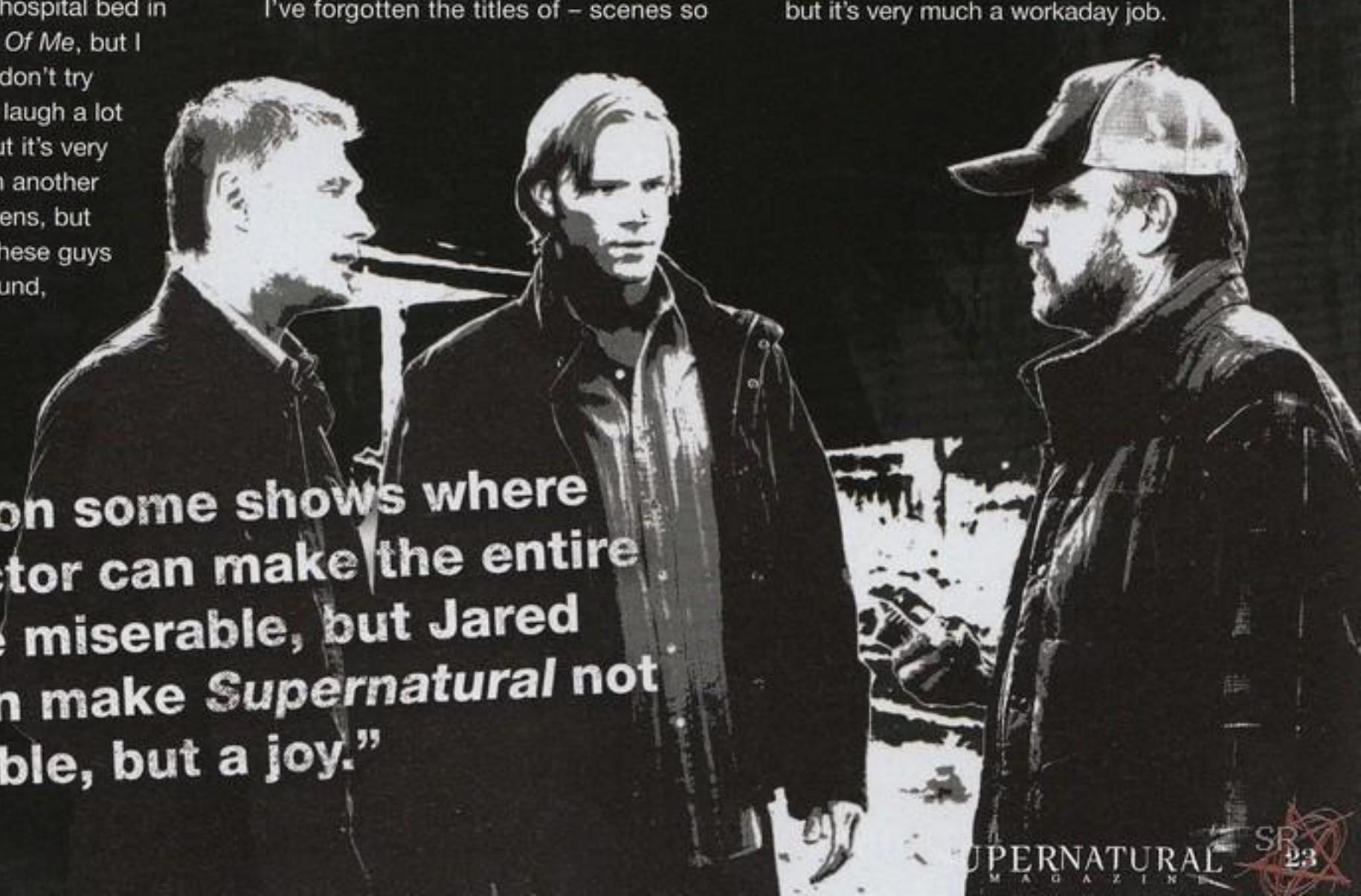
You've often said that it's fun working with Jared Padalecki and Jensen Ackles, too. Have they pulled any stunts on you recently? Do they try to make you laugh or flub your lines during your coverage?
I don't have much to choose from in terms of stunts or pranks the guys have pulled on me, because they don't do it very often. Maybe they're afraid of me. More likely, I don't give them much [of a reaction] when they try it. Jared twisted my toes off-camera all through my big speech in the hospital bed in *Dream A Little Dream Of Me*, but I wouldn't break. They don't try much with me! We all laugh a lot while we're filming, but it's very rare that we try to ruin another person's take. It happens, but for all the reputation these guys have for clowning around, they're also thorough professionals.

What's been your favorite episode to work on or watch?
I don't really have a favorite episode. There are favorite moments, favorite scenes. The emotional scenes between Bobby and Dean have been very pleasing to work on, and I wish I had a few more of those with Sam, just to share the wealth. My favorite scenes to watch are often scenes I'm not in. Jensen's scene with the young Mary in *In The Beginning* was amazing, and Jared's had a couple from episodes I've forgotten the titles of – scenes so good I had to call or email them to let them know how impressed I was. For some reason, too, I've always enjoyed the scenes with girls in their underwear. I don't know why, but somehow those scenes just seem really rich and meaningful!

What's been your favorite *Supernatural* creature?
Easy. The Trickster's two babe bodyguards in *Tall Tales*. You didn't think I was going to say some slime monster, did you?

Of course not! But while the Trickster's babe bodyguards were your favorite "creatures" to admire, what about your favorite creature to watch in a finished episode? Have any of them ever scared you?
Watching *Supernatural*, I don't get too spooked by the scary stuff because while I'm watching I remember that when we shot it I had indigestion from lunch or we had to shoot it about nine times, or [something like that.] The technical aspect of the creation is always there in my mind. I don't want to take away from the mystique of the show, but watching it is entirely different from making it. Making it is a collection of craftsmen joining together and hammering things out, just like making rocking chairs or jet engines. I think we have a lot more fun, but it's very much a workaday job.



"I've been on some shows where the lead actor can make the entire experience miserable, but Jared and Jensen make *Supernatural* not only bearable, but a joy."

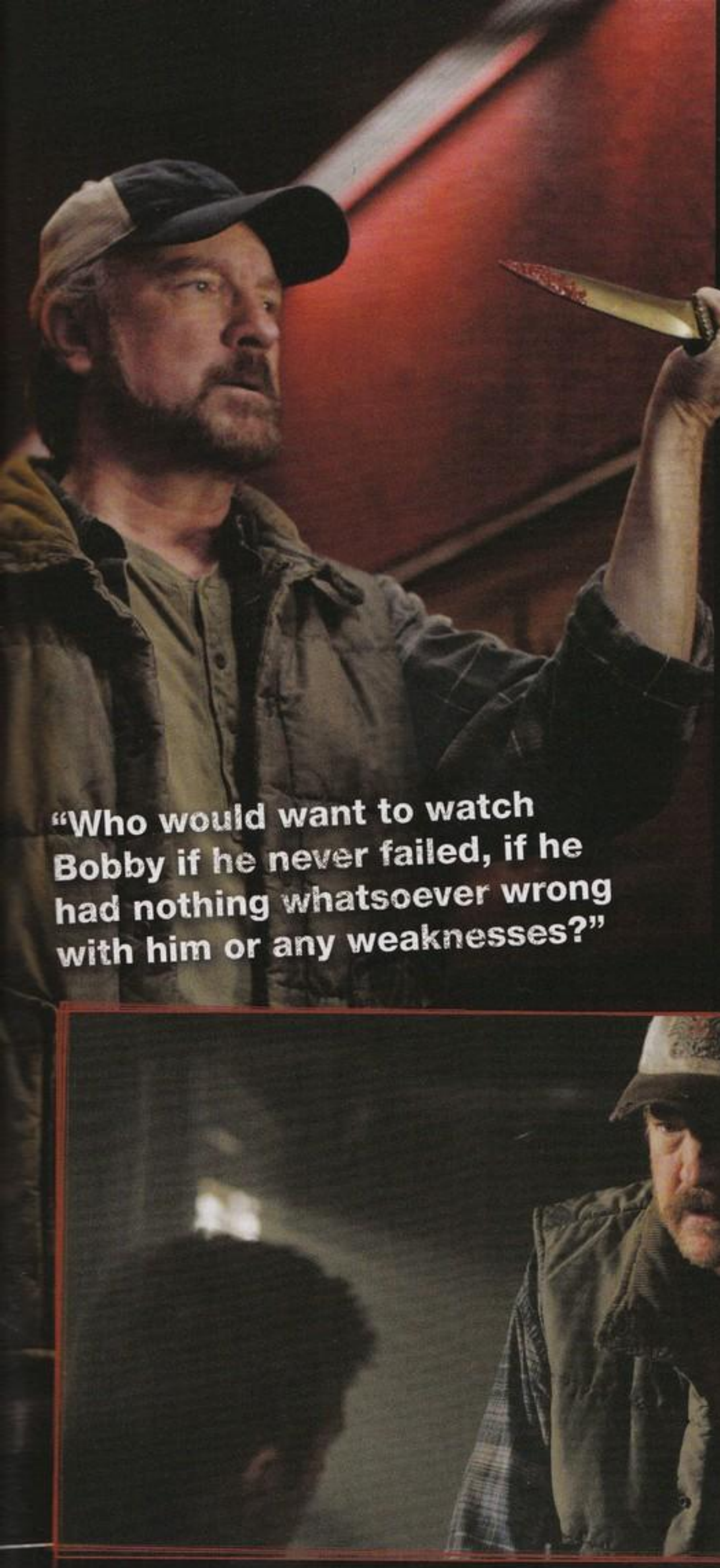
Still, I don't have any patience with people who get to do what we get to do and who complain about it all the time. I've known a handful of people like that, and I don't get it. I mean, actors by and large aren't the most mentally healthy group of people – if they were, they wouldn't be actors. But to get to do what we get to do and then gripe and moan about it, that's just insane to me. Fortunately, we've got nothing like that on this show. Jared and Jensen are absolutely at the top of their games. I've been on some shows where the lead actor can make the entire experience miserable, but Jared and Jensen make *Supernatural* not only bearable, but a joy.

Have any scenes in season four been particularly challenging to shoot?
Everything in season four has been challenging, since the reduced budget and shooting schedule has driven everyone past the point of exhaustion. I've been in every single season finale thus far, and I always marveled at how energetic and happy and pleasant the crew was at the end of a 22-episode season. It's pretty remarkable, in my experience. Most crews are worn out and haggard by that time. Not *Supernatural*'s. But by the end of the second episode of season four, I saw the same kind of exhaustion and low morale that usually kicks in on most shows around episode 20. There's been a real challenge this season for the cast and crew to do as well or better with fewer resources. It doesn't affect me much, because I just drop in from time to time, but I see the toll on the crew. Personally, the most challenging stuff was probably in the second episode of season four [*Are You There, God... It's Me, Dean Winchester*]. The scenes with me lying in the wrecked car, trapped by the twin girls, was tough, because it was very hot with the lights on the car and in the car, and being cramped in a very tiny space. The two little girls, Eve and Lara, were real troupers. They never complained. Me, I whined like a little girl!

Are there any specific cast members (including guest cast), crew members, directors, or writers that you want to praise or share stories about?
Your magazine doesn't have room for all the praise I'd like to lavish on the cast and crew of this show. It's one of the friendliest, most gracious, most fun, and most talented bunches of people I've ever worked with. I so admire Eric Kripke and the writers, most of whom I never see except in their work. We have some wonderful directors, including my namesake, Robert Singer, and Phil Sgriccia, both of whom I go back with a couple of decades almost. And I don't know many directors, or people, for that matter, who achieve the level of loyalty and outright love that our beloved Kim Manners did. I don't think there's a person on this show that wouldn't have lain down in front of a train for Kim. I know I would have. As to the rest of the crew, I could go through them name by name and say something truthfully splendid about each of them. Suffice it to say that I love them, love working with them, and wish that every actor could work with each of them sometime.

What are your thoughts on season four so far?
It seems to me, from the limited number of episodes I've shot and seen, that there are *huge* things in store for the Winchester boys. And I suspect (and hope) that the season brings them (and Bobby) to the biggest cliffhanger the world has ever seen, with an apocalyptic season five to wrap things up!

Anything else you'd like to share about your work on *Supernatural*?



"Who would want to watch Bobby if he never failed, if he had nothing whatsoever wrong with him or any weaknesses?"

At the moment, nothing occurs to me, other than the fact that I'm still wondering how Bobby's house suddenly got a kitchen after season two. It showed up in the dream sequence of *Dream A Little Dream Of Me*, then was there when the show went back to real life, and it's still there. But if you look at *Devil's Trap*, you'll see that the room the boys first enter in Bobby's house didn't have a kitchen in it back then. You'd think that if Bobby had remodeled, a) the boys would have noticed it and b) he'd have remodeled with a *new* kitchen instead of building one as old and dirty as the rest of his place! But, hey, that's just me.

In your first interview with us, you closed with, "Oh, and Bobby needs a hot girlfriend." Do you know if Eric Kripke read that? If so, why has he not written you in a hot girlfriend yet? Do you think there's any chance your wish will come true?

I don't know if Eric read that part, but I'm sure he knows how I feel! He has to think of the show first, so unless the hot girlfriend comes with a really great storyline, it's hard to guess whether Eric will ever have pity on me. Of course, maybe he's just having pity on the hot girlfriend!

LIKE MOTHER, LIKE DAUGHTER

Words: Bryan Cairns

A potential love interest turned fallen comrade, Jo Harvelle had quite an impact on the Winchesters. We met actress ALONA TAL to find out more...

Introduced in season two's *Everybody Loves a Clown*, Jo Harvelle was the daughter of hunters and an aspiring hunter herself, against her mother Ellen's wishes. At first, it seemed Ellen was right to worry, as Jo was captured by the spirit of serial killer Dr. H.H. Holmes on her first hunt in *No Exit*. And, after a flirtation with Dean, and a terrifying hostage situation involving a possessed Sam when she learned the truth about her father Bill's death, Jo disappeared from the Winchesters' lives, seemingly forever. When she returned in season five's *Good God Y'all*, however, it was with all guns blazing and in a grudging hunting partnership with Ellen, who understandably didn't want her only daughter to suffer the same fate as her late husband. Jo survived that encounter, however, helping Sam and Dean defeat the Horseman War, at least for a time.

When the time came to attack Lucifer directly and try to kill him using the Colt in *Abandon All Hope*, Jo and Ellen headed into battle alongside the Winchesters once again.This time, however, Jo was not to be so lucky. Helping Dean when he was attacked by Hellhounds, Jo was mortally injured and chose to die a hero's death along with her mother. Detonating a makeshift bomb to kill the approaching Hellhounds and allowing Dean and Sam to escape to go after Lucifer, Jo proved she was a true hunter to the end. We caught up with actress Alona Tal before she filmed *Abandon All Hope*, to find out what it was like playing this headstrong hunter…

***The Official Supernatural Magazine*: In the beginning, how much was outlined to you about Jo and what made her tick?**

Alona Tal: When I first came in to read for Jo, it was pointed out that she was a new hunter. They wanted someone who was experienced and knew the craft. They didn't really go much into what makes her tick, but what ended up happening was the whole father situation, and her dad being killed off really set the stage for her going into the hunting business. Later, it became very clear she actually wanted to be a hunter. The viewers got to see her go on her first hunt [in season two's *No Exit*]. Initially, she was supposed to know a lot about it, having grown up in the business with hunters all around her.

Were you already adept at handling a rifle and knife, or was there some of kind of weapons training boot camp to prepare you for the role?

For the knife-handling, they brought someone in that sat with me for a couple of days. I didn't have too much time to get very familiar with it. Usually if you're going to do an action role, you get at least a couple of months to really get acquainted with whatever you're going to be doing. They were really patient with me, and I did my best. As for the guns, I had previous training so I wasn't afraid of that – I knew what I was doing in that department.

What would you say made Jo and Dean's relationship complex, and were there originally plans to have it progress further?

Initially, Jo was introduced as a possible future love interest for Dean. The relationship being complex has to do with the fact that she was the first girl on the show that was familiar with this world and history. Although she turned out to be a damsel in distress [in *No Exit*], she really isn't. It's just when you're on your own, you tend to get in trouble. The boys are never on their own; they always have each other, and if they aren't together, they get in trouble. Same with Jo. In the end, their family history made it so that a love connection really couldn't work.

How much fun was it playing that banter between Jo and Dean?

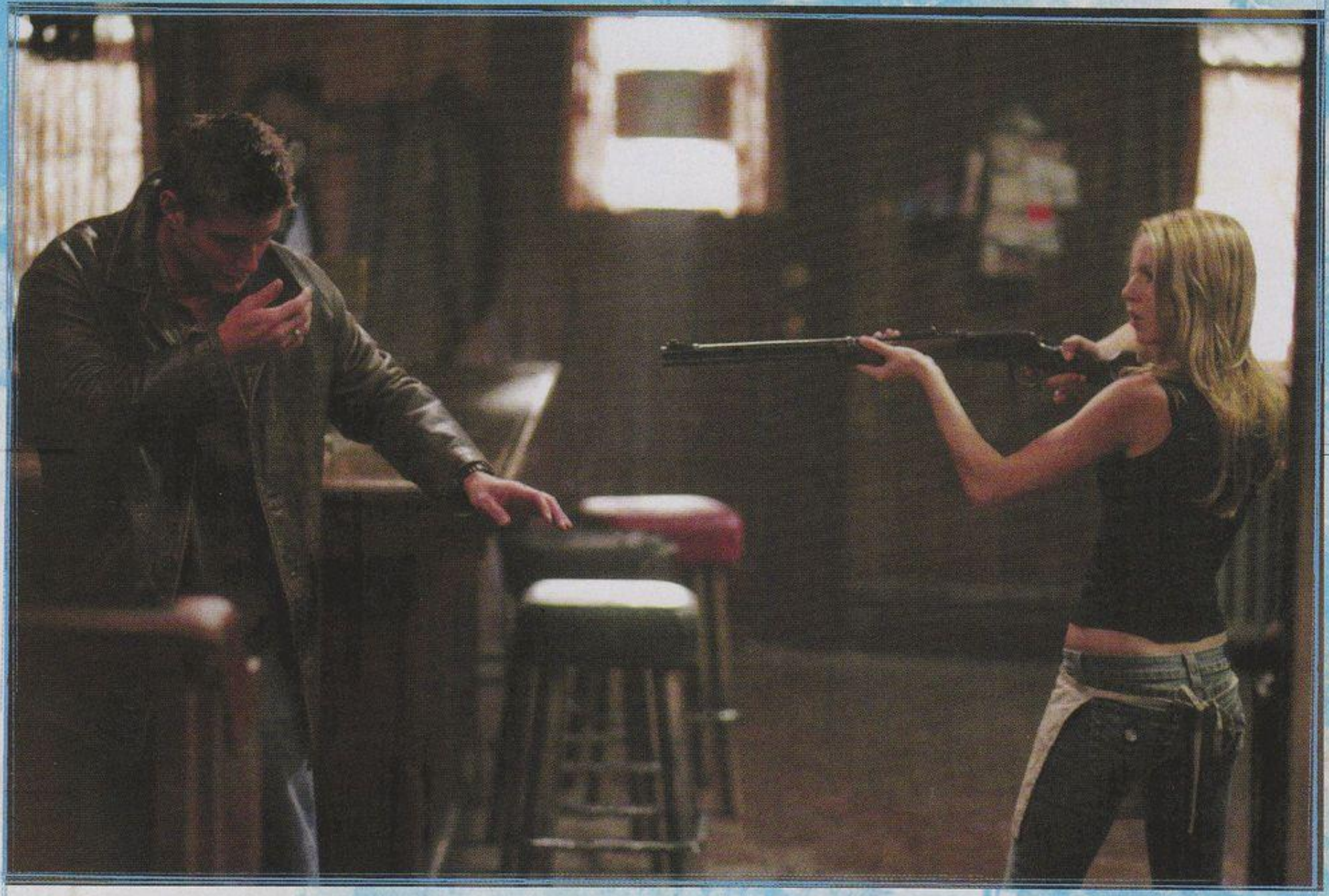
It was a lot of fun. I do that anyway. I like banter and being sarcastic. Jensen Ackles is very smart and sarcastic by nature, and he has such a great comedic timing that it was actually hard to keep a straight face. You don't want to step over the line; it's fun because we can roll with it.

There was a definite rhythm to it, so did one piece of dialogue stick out?

It was actually one of the first ones when Dean goes "God, don't let that be a gun." I say "No, I'm just really happy to see you." That was my favorite line, because it was really a badass way to introduce the character.

As you mentioned, Jo wanted to follow in her late father's hunting footsteps. How would you say she fared out in the field for the first time in *No Exit*?

"I LIKE THAT THEY BROUGHT JO BACK HUNTING AND HANDLING HER BUSINESS."



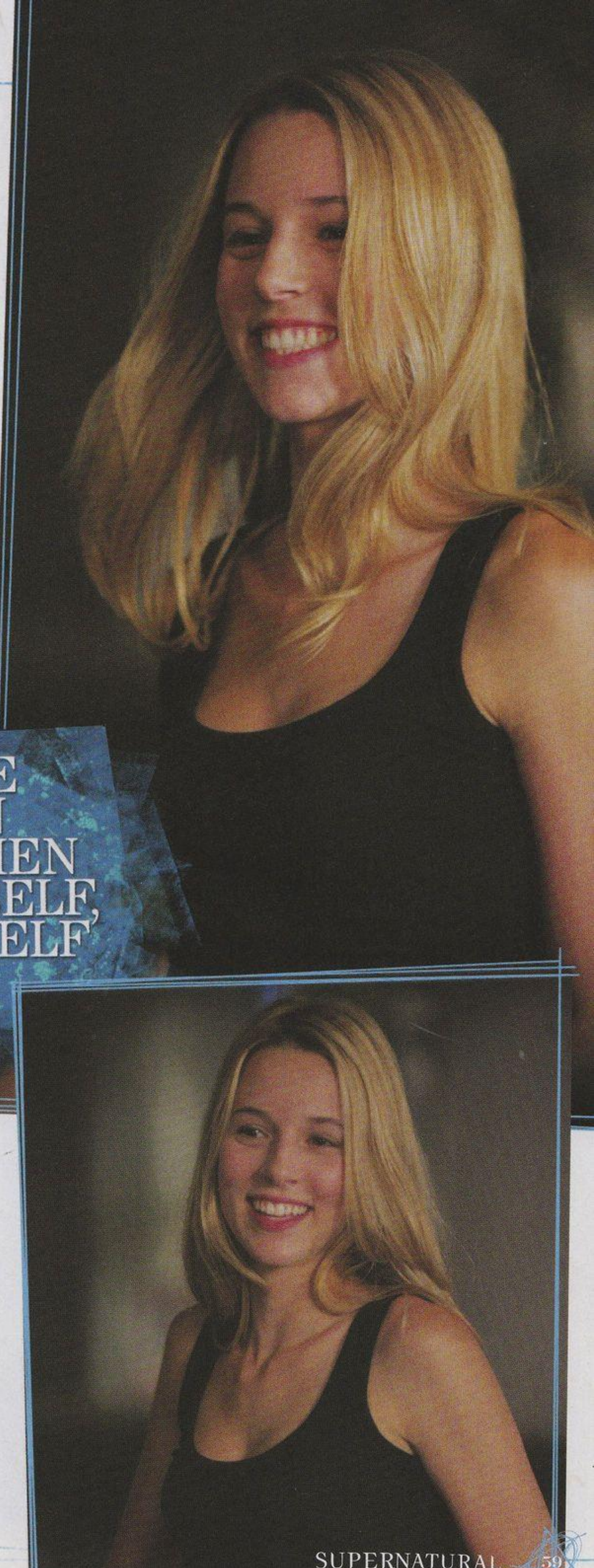
Not so good. Jo took a little bit too much on herself, and when you're by yourself, you open yourself up to trouble. Even when you go to war, you don't see soldiers just going in by themselves. You always have back-up. Things go wrong more often than not. She was so eager to get into this world. That file she gave Dean that she made herself, that's like an eager student saying "I'm ready! I'm ready! Let me at them!" That eager behavior got her in trouble. At the same time, she didn't want to wait around. It was a 'now or never' deal for Jo.

At least Jo lived in the end of that episode anyway...

I thought it was a good experience. Even when she was in trouble, she didn't give up. Jo didn't roll over and go "Okay, that's it." There was always that determination to get herself out of there, because there was no other choice.

Was it challenging filming in that enclosed wooden box for that episode?

It was more painful than anything. My neck was so



"JO TOOK A LITTLE BIT TOO MUCH ON HERSELF, AND WHEN YOU'RE BY YOURSELF, YOU OPEN YOURSELF UP TO TROUBLE."

sore. For 16 hours, I had to stay with my head tilted up, but laying down. They put Bengay on [my neck]. It was claustrophobic [in the box]. They always had a little opening, but it wasn't just two walls. It was four or three-and-a-half walls closing in on you. It helped because I really get claustrophobic; I don't like tight spaces.

The hands closing in on Jo appeared to be frighteningly real.

They used a really cool special effects trick for that. They actually did have his [actor Stephen Aberle, who played Holmes] hand come through and then they put the wall up. I didn't have to imagine anything. Everything you see was actually done, except when I turn and stab him. Obviously, I stabbed the air.

Were you shocked when they called you back for *Good God, Y'All* in season five, and what were your thoughts on the circumstances she was brought back under?

I was very surprised, but happy! I didn't think after the fan reaction I'd be coming back, especially because it had been two-and-a-half seasons. I realized anything could happen on this show. I like that they brought Jo back hunting and handling her business. You see her a little quieter and not as mouthy as before. Banter doesn't always work, and she learned that the hard way. I liked that they didn't go too much into what happened. It was what was going on and Jo was hunting with her mom. I wish they had made it that Ellen wanted to hunt with Jo just because she wanted to be with her, and not so much because she thought Jo couldn't handle it. That's my wish. I don't think my character was stupid, because I don't think Jo was incapable. People just didn't give her the benefit of the doubt.

Speaking of being capable, even though she was being manipulated, did it feel good having Jo confronting Ellen?

Well, I wasn't really confronting my mother; I was

confronting the demon [I thought was possessing my mother]. I was upset. It's even worse because it's inhabiting the body of somebody I love. Jo has dealt with somebody that is possessed before [Sam in *Born Under a Bad Sign*] and knew where that could go. That's upsetting to Jo, and she knew Ellen could die. That ups the stakes, because Ellen is my mother. As for the skank line, you just say whatever comes to your mind in a stressful situation. "You evil skank!" When I read it, I went, "Ouch! Is that what I say? Okay."
You see in the following scene when Jo's sitting with a pipe bomb that she's happy with the whole situation. She wanted to go out blazing because she didn't want her mom to get killed.

"I DON'T THINK JO WAS INCAPABLE. PEOPLE JUST DIDN'T GIVE HER THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT."

What was it like working with Jared and Jensen?
Fun! They both have good senses of humor, they're down-to-Earth, and very thoughtful. If you've worked on a set before, it's really unusual to have the same crew for as long as the show has been on the air. I've come back after two-and-a-half seasons and the crew's 95 per cent the same. That says a lot about the environment which is set by your stars. The boys are definitely spear-heading the energy and setting a beautiful tone.

TAL TALES
What Alona did next...

***The Official Supernatural Magazine*: What's the low down on your upcoming projects *Kalamity* and *Undocumented*?**
Alona Tal: *Kalamity* is a thriller and I play the girlfriend of Jonathan Jackson. I can't really go into it too much. She's the trigger for what happens in the movie, which you don't really find out. *Undocumented* is a wonderful movie with horrific elements in it. It's gory at times and is about a group of film students that go to document immigrants illegally crossing the border. They get caught by a group of vigilantes who decide they don't like how the government is handling the illegal immigrants in regard to health, drug, and work issues. These are real current topics that people are talking about. The drug cartel wars are very relevant, and the whole Minuteman situation. We just get caught in the line of fire of what they're doing. The movie has a lot of scary elements to it, but the scariest part is that it could potentially happen. It has a holocaust socialist element of people deciding they're all going to do something for the good of the country, but what they're doing is really insane.

DEJA VIEW STEVEN WILLIAMS

Words: Jayne Nelson

A hunter who was dragged back into the business and away from his whisky by the escalating events of the Apocalypse, Rufus Turner is a lesson to Sam and Dean about what hunting can do to you. Introduced in season three's *Time is on My Side*, he returned for season five's *Good God, Y'all* in all-action mode. We tracked down actor Steven Williams for a little Q&A.

The Official Supernatural Magazine: Did you watch *Supernatural* before you were cast?

Steven Williams: No, I never watched it. I wasn't even aware it was on! They sent me over the first couple of seasons before I [started] so I could watch it beforehand. I liked it. I've always been a part of shows like that – I was the host of something called *Encounters* for about a season, which was all about Area 51 and UFOs, and then I was the mysterious Mr. X on *The X-Files*. *Supernatural* was right up my alley!

Did you think of a backstory for Rufus?

Well, the backstory's already there! He's an ex-hunter, and in my jargon he's a 'recovering hunter.' You're never an ex. Once a hunter, always a hunter. He's a hunter who maybe burnt out over something, or he just doesn't want to live the lifestyle an more or he's found something else to live for. He's gone to the bottle; the bottle has taken the edge off him. We can add stuff as we go.

It's a pretty crappy job, being a hunter... After a while you would think, "That's it, I've had enough."

Yeah. "None of us get out of here alive" is sort of his attitude.

I did notice in his house in *Time Is On My Side* there was a sheriff's badge on the wall, and a little police shield...

He'd been a cop. He was an ex-cop. All the hunters have jobs, as I understood the script, but I didn't get into it that much. They are something else other than hunters; I do believe that probably there have been students who turned hunter or cops who turned hunter or lawyers who turned hunter. Rufus actually says [in his first scene with Dean], "A girl like this walks through my door, I check her out." He's sort of a detective kind of guy.

You did 'drunk' very well on the screen in that episode. Is it hard playing that?

Oh, no, not with my history! All I had to do was remember the previous weekend! I was channeling yesterday! [*Laughs*] None of that Method stuff for me. If it's on the page, I can give it to you on the screen! People tend to overdo it when they play drunk. But even as a youngster, in real life, you could always tell when I was drunk, as that was when I got my quietest and most controlled. My friends would look at me and say, "Steven's quiet and he's controlled... he's drunk." [*Laughs*] Because the arena in which I grew up, I knew that that's when you got hurt, when you were out of control. The moment I felt myself getting drunk, I would start fighting for control. That's the idea of playing a good drunk – you're fighting for control. You're not as sloppy as people would think you'd be. And somebody who's an alcoholic has a tolerance level.

How did you get the role of Rufus?

It was one of those wonderful things that actors absolutely love – I was just offered the role. I was offered it by Kim Manners; he held the distinction of being involved with me in two of my favorite shows – *21 Jump Street* and *The X-Files*. Kim Manners directed me in my debut episode of *21 Jump Street* as well as my very last episode of *The X-Files*, so in between we had a history. We met in 1986, and when the role of Rufus came up he went, "Steven Williams, that's the guy." Me and Billy Drago – those were the two characters [in *Time Is On My Side*], Kim informed me when I got to set, "When I saw these two roles I looked at you for this guy and him for the other guy." We were both just offered the roles. It's an actor's dream.

Did you know a lot of people on the *Supernatural* crew after having worked with them on *The X-Files*?

I always feel at home when I go to Vancouver. I knew most of them. I'd worked with most of the crew for five years already on *Jump Street*, and we did some episodes of *Wiseguy* when that show shot up there. The Vancouver crew is like family to me. When I got Mr. X everybody was like, "Oh, Steven, *you're* doing X! Great!" These guys were family, they'd known me for five years previous to joining the show!

Do you enjoy horror as a genre?

If it's a good story. If the story is mysterious... I don't enjoy horror for the sake of horror. I love the unknown – that's one thing I loved about *The X-Files*, that you really don't know everything about our existence. That sort of mystery.

It seems like Rufus just had to come back to *Supernatural*.

Oh, he had to! That's the reason for having him back! You've gotta see what a badass this guy was! He has to be the guy to come in and rescue everybody. He can put that bottle down and stumble into the monster's lair and take him out! I love that.

And Rufus has survived!

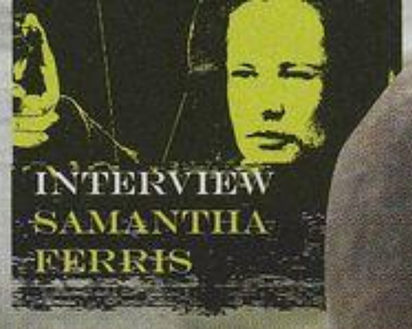
I'm gonna insist that Rufus be invincible! [*Laughs*]

INTERVIEW
SAMANTHA
FERRIS

A HERO'S END

Words: Bryan Cairns

As one of *Supernatural*'s most popular guest characters, it was a real shock when hunter Ellen Harvelle sacrificed herself along with daughter Jo for the greater good in *Abandon All Hope*. *The Official Supernatural Magazine* caught up with actress Samantha Ferris to find out how she felt about Ellen's swan song...



***The Official Supernatural Magazine*: Before season five, it had been a while since we'd seen Ellen. Apparently she was scheduled to reappear in season three before the writer's strike hit. Do you know what they originally had planned?**

Samantha Ferris: No, but I was supposed to come back in the very last episode [of that season, *No Rest For The Wicked*], so I think they were probably going to kill me! That's my take on it.

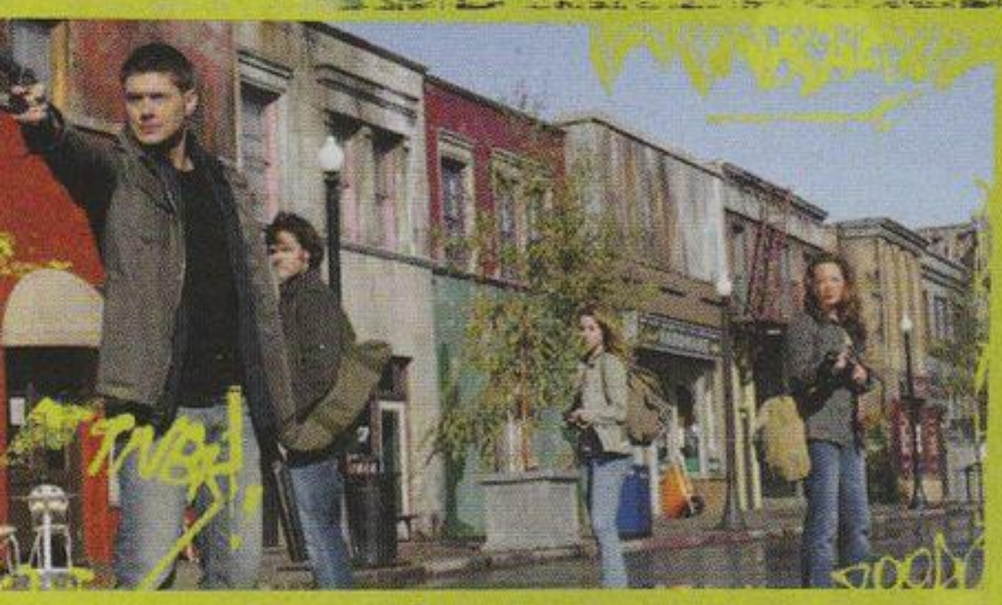
So were you surprised to get the call to return in season five for *Good God, Y'All*?

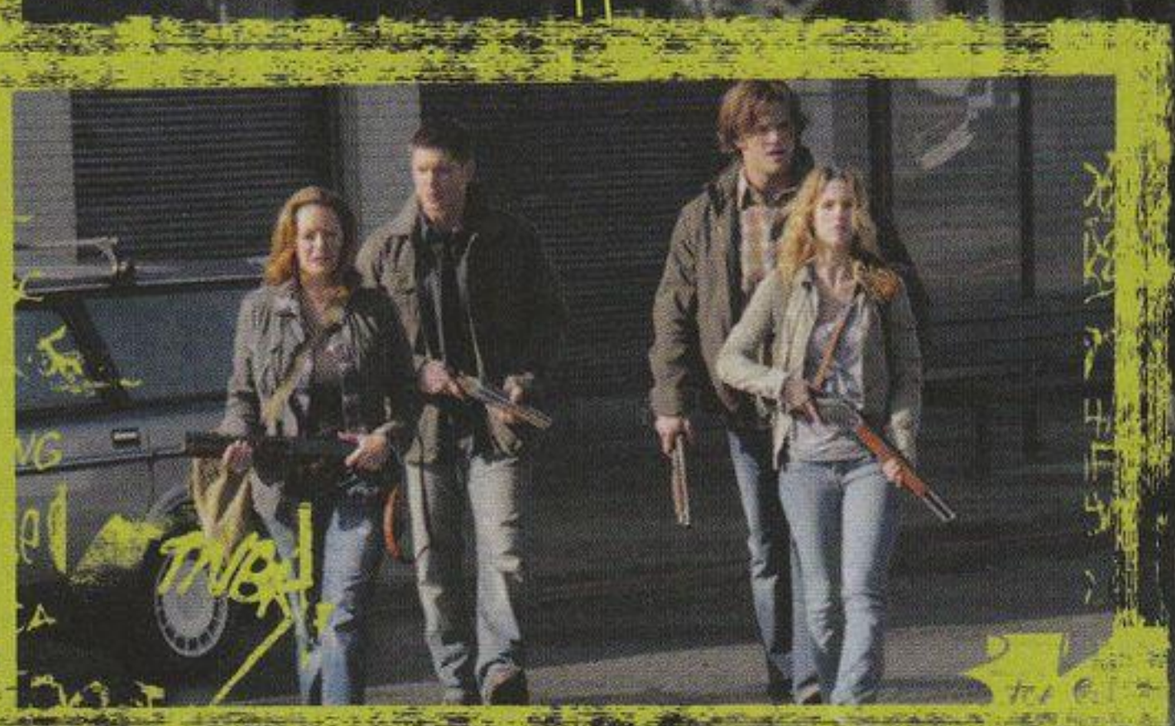
I was, because it had been a while. The viewers were big fans of Ellen and I know they care about the fans [on *Supernatural*]. It had been about two and a half years, and it felt like they had moved on. I thought, "Why are they bringing me back?" I thought somewhere down the road they were going to kill us, but I didn't think it was going to happen as quickly as it did. I don't take credit for this, but Ellen was a loved character because she fitted in. She was a kick-ass broad with a gun and a bar. She was a rebel, and they probably couldn't find a woman the fans could really gel with. A lot of the fans are women, and the psychology is they think they have a chance with Sam or Dean. It's the fantasy. They think they have a shot, so when you put a Katie [Cassidy] or an Alona [Tal] in there, it's a challenge to them, and I was never going to be a challenge. There were certainly fans who thought there should be a hook up between Ellen and Dean, because Jensen and I had great chemistry on air. I jokingly once said to Eric Kripke in season two, "Hey, if you are going to do that, can you give me a little notice so I can go to the gym and go on a diet?" He laughed and said, "Sam, I don't think that's ever going to happen."

When you hear those suggestions, are they flattering or a little disturbing?

Are you kidding me? It's flattering! In the beginning, the stuff some people wrote about Alona [on the internet] was horrible. I would imagine they have that response to a lot of females who come into their boys' lives. It didn't creep me out. It would never happen [between Ellen and Dean], but I think it would be too weird anyway.

The comedic beats are always a treat, so was it difficult keeping





"NO MATTER HOW ELLEN FELT ABOUT HER DAUGHTER, THERE'S A BUILT-IN WIRING THAT EVERY MOTHER HAS."

a straight face while throwing holy water in Jensen's face in *Good God Y'all*?

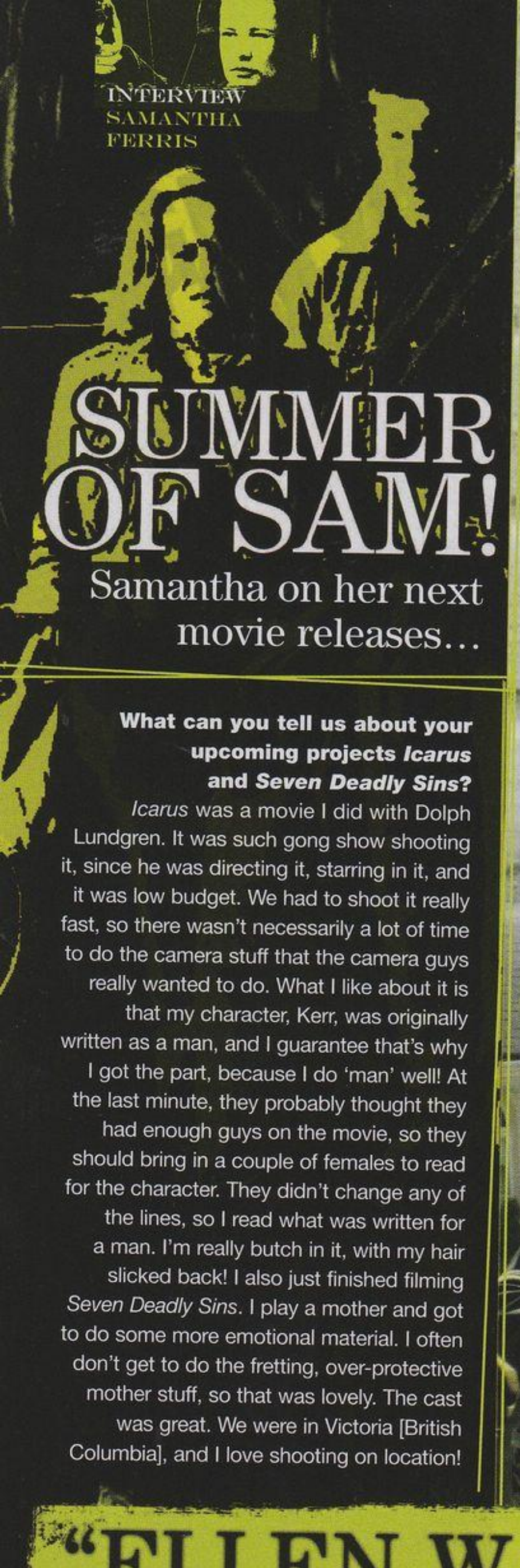
No, because that was my first day back after two or three years, so I was a bit nervous. I probably threw it in his face five or six times, and it was for a camera shot. It was really hot, really bright, and there was a lot going on. They do so much comedy on the show anyway, and we tried it a few different ways with me throwing it in his face and looking at him or pulling a gun. When you redo it, it's more for technical reasons than anything else.

Jo seemed capable on more than one occasion, so why was Ellen so dead set against her becoming a hunter?

Well, because it's her daughter! There's a maternal instinct that goes on with the mother bear over the cub, where she would give anything to keep them safe. No matter how Ellen felt about her daughter, there's a built-in wiring that every mother has. To have my daughter walk into danger goes against everything that has to do with hunting; it has to do with the fact she wants her daughter to stay alive, and the second Jo becomes a hunter, that's not necessarily an option.

How did you discover *Abandon All Hope* would be Ellen's last stand?

My agent called me, and I guess she had talked to casting. She said, "Good news and bad news. You're coming back." And I said, "I'm dying, right?" My stomach hit the floor. It's kind of like being dumped, and a lot of things fly through your head at the same time. "Oh my God! It's over! I'm never going to see these guys again!" Then there's, "I'm not going back to the show. How am I going to make a living?" Plus you question your abilities as an actor and whether they fired you because you suck. Then you stop, think about it, and it makes sense. It's the mid-season cliffhanger, I knew they needed some big stuff [to happen], and I couldn't see Jo and I being back full-time ever. I don't know what they would do with us. Phil Sgriccia, one of the directors and producers, called me the next day and said, "Sam, it's Phil." I was laughing, "Hey Phil, you f***er." He was like, "How did you know? I'm sorry. We wanted to be the first to tell you. Just so you know, this is not a bad thing. You go out in a blaze of glory. This is a great episode." He was painting it as a good thing, and he was right. Phil said they really needed that kick, and that we were perfect fodder for it. They needed something big, but they weren't killing off any regular characters.

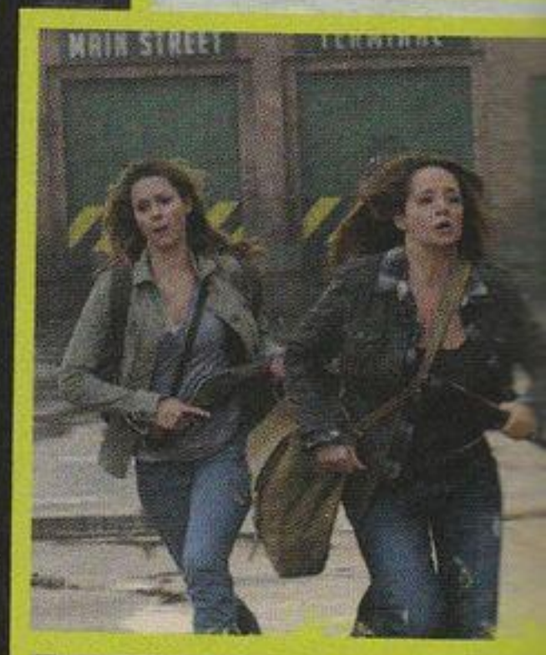


SUMMER OF SAM!

Samantha on her next movie releases...

What can you tell us about your upcoming projects *Icarus* and *Seven Deadly Sins*?

Icarus was a movie I did with Dolph Lundgren. It was such gong show shooting it, since he was directing it, starring in it, and it was low budget. We had to shoot it really fast, so there wasn't necessarily a lot of time to do the camera stuff that the camera guys really wanted to do. What I like about it is that my character, Kerr, was originally written as a man, and I guarantee that's why I got the part, because I do 'man' well! At the last minute, they probably thought they had enough guys on the movie, so they should bring in a couple of females to read for the character. They didn't change any of the lines, so I read what was written for a man. I'm really butch in it, with my hair slicked back! I also just finished filming *Seven Deadly Sins*. I play a mother and got to do some more emotional material. I often don't get to do the fretting, over-protective mother stuff, so that was lovely. The cast was great. We were in Victoria [British Columbia], and I love shooting on location!



"ELLEN WAS A LOVED CHARACTER BECAUSE SHE FITTED IN. SHE WAS A KICK-ASS BROAD WITH A GUN AND A BAR."

You ask a lot of questions in your head, like, "Why did you bring us back if you were going to kill us?" I don't think that was the intention the whole time. When they originally brought us back, I think they needed some female characters on the show. In the writer's room, there are probably pictures of all the people who had been on the show and they say, "Okay, who do we want to bring back? Should we create new characters?" Then it's like, "The fans are still fans of Ellen and Jo. Let's bring them back." We did one episode earlier in the year, Jo and Ellen were back, these characters aren't going to be regulars anyway, so we might as well kill them off. I don't know if they had that planned the whole way.

Were you pleased with the way they showcased Ellen's softer side in *Abandon All Hope*?
Oh yeah, because look at the power it had! It was our big swan song, you want to see that! These were Ellen's last moments on Earth, so I think it made sense to see that emotional side of her. Everyone always loved her because they thought she was this kick-ass broad, but to see Ellen go out with pride, dignity, and emotion was necessary.

It must have been strange acting against CGI Hellhounds.
Yeah, I don't know how people do stuff like *The Incredible Hulk* where you basically have nothing to respond to. They talk you through it and Phil would say, "Okay, there's some Hellhounds off to the right," and then you would look in that direction. There's no music or growling. They pulled the door open with a rope – you see it open, which is when I look up, and then he says, "They're in there now, Sam." It's tough, but you do what you do and you're an actor for a reason.

Did you have a favorite line of dialogue in your last episode?
Definitely the one where I turned around and said, "Kick it in the ass," because that was a homage to [*Supernatural* executive producer and director] Kim Manners. That wasn't in the script. I was just supposed to turn around and go, "Don't miss." But Brad [S. Creasser] the camera guy came up beforehand, and that line was something Kim would say before he called "Action!" We were really running out of time and Brad said, "When you turn around, can you just do one where you say, 'Kick it in the ass.'" That was my favorite line, because it was for Kim.

Did it feel to you like Ellen was a bit like a surrogate mother to the Winchester boys?
Yes, if I had to say one way or the other. I have to be careful with that, because there's a lot of talk about what she was to them. "Surrogate mother" is a strong term. They definitely listened to Ellen and looked up to her. She was a living connection to their dad, and because of that she was important. Ellen had been around for a long time and of all the people the Winchesters have run into, they don't know who they can trust except for Bobby and Ellen. In terms of nurturing, there were moments of it for sure. They needed a mother-type figure, but on a regular basis, I was more of an equal to them in terms of my ability and knowledge of what was going on.

We understand the crew put together a special CD as a goodbye gift for you.
It was put together by Phil and Kristin, who are in the L.A. office. It was very touching and made me cry. It was a montage of Alona and I throughout the seasons. It played to the song "She's a Lady" by Tom Jones. You could tell time was spent on it because they had to go through all the seasons to find the footage and put it all together. When it faded to black, the words that came up at the end were "Thank you so much Alona and Sam for all your hard work." It was so touching, because they didn't have to do that.

So have we seen the last of Ellen?
The last scene I shot was of me getting up, taking the chain off the door, and walking back [to Jo and the bomb]. I sent an email to Eric saying, "Just going to shoot the last scene now. Just wanted to say thanks for everything. This show has been the best TV experience I've ever had. I will miss it greatly and appreciate the opportunity." He sent back "Oh Sam, you're absolutely fantastic! And hey, on this show, nobody really dies." And they don't! I would be surprised if they didn't bring us back if there's a sixth season. I'd be surprised if they didn't call back some pretty key characters for the series finale. I could definitely see Ellen as part of that. Maybe as an angel!

What are you going to miss the most about Ellen and *Supernatural*?
The fact that I could wear jeans and boots was such a bonus! I love that Ellen was more rough and tumble. And I *love* having a gun! You always want to carry a gun, shoot someone, or do a death scene. As for the character, I love that she was so tough, yet underneath there was such a loving person. I love that the character was so much fun. All the other stuff I normally get to do is very formal cop-type stuff. There was a lot of emotion to Ellen, even though she was barking orders!

Last time *The Official Supernatural Magazine* spoke to actress Alona Tal, it was just before her character Jo Harvelle and mother Ellen's shocking deaths in *Abandon All Hope*. Now the dust has settled, we caught up with Alona to find out how she felt about Jo's death, Jo's feelings for Dean, and what she'll miss most about the show...

Hey, Jo!

***The Official Supernatural Magazine*: How did you discover *Abandon All Hope* would be Jo's last stand, and what was your initial reaction?**

Alona Tal: I actually got a call from Phil [Sgriccia], who is one of the producers and who also directed the episode. They called to break it to me, and I gotta tell you, I thought it was grand. Am I happy to die? No, but it's my job and what I do. If it benefits the show, which they believed it did – and I think it did – then I'm all for it. My job is to deliver that.

Were you pleased with how they touched on the whole Dean/Jo relationship in the episode?

It was a long time coming, and the fans asked for it. The producers are very big on giving the fans what they want, because if it wasn't for them, who would we be doing this all for? They were interested in seeing how my character has grown and how that would translate. The truth is, Jo and Dean have a lot in common and a lot of history, but she wasn't going to [give in] that easily, which I liked. It gave it a little more meaning.

The way Jo turned down Dean's advances was classic *Supernatural*.

I thought that was great, and it wasn't snarky. She truly wanted to go in the other room and go crazy [with him]. Now if there wasn't so much at stake, Jo probably would have said, "Sure, let's see what happens!" Jo's a smart girl, she cared for Dean, and she didn't want it to be that way.

You've always wanted Jo to be taken seriously as a hunter. Do you feel they conveyed that more in this episode?

Very much so! She's the one who called the shots in this one. "This is what we are doing. This is the situation, so let's be real about it." Everyone was denying it or looking the other way, and even in the delicate state she was in, Jo was the one who had to accept it and be the bigger person. That's huge. It showed a lot of growth, and I actually don't think a lot of hunters would have done that. Jo kind of followed in her father's footsteps by dying on a hunt.

At the same time, they certainly spotlighted the dynamic between Jo and Ellen.

Yeah, you hadn't really seen any of those sides from both of us. After years of hunting together, there were some grown-up mom and daughter moments. It wasn't so much, "I am going to teach or educate you," as Mommy usually does. Jo was more Ellen's equal. I liked the line, "This may be your last chance to treat me like an adult. You might want to take it."

Did you have any discussions with Samantha Ferris over the script?

Of course. We kept saying how bummed we were that we were dying, but at least we went out in a blaze of glory! That was pretty much the extent of our conversations. How can we help each other? What can we give each other in the scene? Samantha is a professional and just wants to do her job well.

Were there any special goodbyes for you on the set?

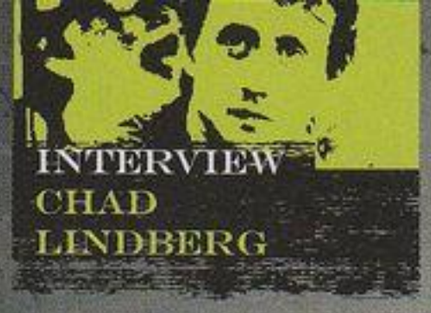
Oh, yeah. The show and the production team had a special CD made for us, a thank you and goodbye from all the previous episodes. It was a little montage to say thank you for all the great work we did. It was really touching. We've both been a part of other shows and never had we had anything like that before. The *Supernatural* team was very supportive.

What are you going to miss the most about the character of Jo Harvelle and *Supernatural* as a whole?

The ability to completely jump head-first into a different universe. Honestly, I'm just going to miss the people, the crew, and the actors. The work you do up there is unlike on any other show. And it was a lot of fun, but it's not over. You never know what might happen [on *Supernatural*], and you have to stay open-minded. I got what I wanted for Jo, which was respect.

"We kept saying how bummed we were that we were dying, but at least we went out in a blaze of glory!"

Words: Bryan Cairns



INTERVIEW
CHAD
LINDBERG

Photo: Lizz Sisson

Badass Is In!

Words: Nicholas Knight

One of the most unexpected returns in *Supernatural* has to have been that of Ash in *Dark Side of the Moon*. Last seen dead in the burned-out Harvelle's Roadhouse, he showed up as a hacker in Heaven. *The Official Supernatural Magazine* caught up with fan-favorite actor Chad Lindberg to find out more...

INTERVIEW
CHAD
LINDBERG

“I’m excited with being in Heaven, because they can’t kill me again!”

Photo: Lizz Sisson

Ever since the shocking destruction of Harvelle's Roadhouse in season two's *All Hell Breaks Loose Part 1*, there was a great deal of debate among *Supernatural* fans as to whether or not the quirky Ash was actually dead. After all, he could've lent his wristwatch to someone right before the roadhouse burned down, right? Never mind that there was a barbequed corpse sporting the remains of a mullet; that too could be explained away as a coincidence, since it wouldn't be unheard of for another American hunter to have a questionable hairstyle. But, of course, those discussions were laid to rest when Ash reappeared in season five's *Dark Side of the Moon*... dead, and yet still in Harvelle's Roadhouse, and in Heaven no less. Actor Chad Lindberg shares some insights into the one-of-a-kind mind of his fan-favorite character.

***The Official Supernatural Magazine*: So how did it feel to be back on *Supernatural*?**

Chad Lindberg: It's exciting. I'm really thrilled. Since my supposed death, I've done a lot of conventions, and the fans told me up and down that they wanted me to come back. They even sent letters to Eric Kripke. I've never seen such a loyal fan base as the *Supernatural* fans; they're quite powerful. I truly believe it was because of them that I came back, so I think the fans are probably ecstatic.

Speaking of all the conventions you've been to, we heard a rumor that you had an unusual encounter with a photographer at a con...

[*Laughs*] Well, the fans are always asking me if Jared and Jensen played any pranks on me, because they're big pranksters, and I always tell them "no," because it never really happened. So, one of the conventions I did was EyeCon in Florida, and I'm tight with the director of that convention, so I came up with an idea and said, "You know what? Let's give the fans a prank that they'll remember!" I had the photographer come in during my Q&A and say, "You screwed up my life!" because earlier that day I actually did fall on one of his tripods and broke it, which set it up. Anyway, he comes in and he's like, "I was wondering if you're going to pay for the stuff you broke?" I said, "I'm doing a panel, we'll talk about it later." And he said, "You'd better pay me! And by the way, I'm really glad you weren't in the other *Fast and the Furious* movies because you *sucked* in the first one." I dropped my mic and jumped off the stage and tackled him! We started fighting and then the convention people and security came and dragged us out of the auditorium. The fans were hysterical, they were shouting, "Turn off your cameras!" because they were trying to protect me. We let them sit with it for a good minute or two and then we came in and the joke was on them. They howled with laughter about that for days.

Speaking of pranks, in *Simon Said*, you had to do a scene with Jensen and Jared in the nude, so did you ever actually answer the door naked? Did the boys make any jokes about the situation?

I was pretty much naked. I just had a skin-tone-colored thong on. Jensen and Jared couldn't keep a straight face. I'd open the door and we'd all bust up laughing, so it took us a while before we actually were able to get through it. That was a special day. [*Laughs*]

The sign on your door from that scene was memorable as well. Was "Dr. Badass" in the script, or is that a nickname the crew gave you?

That was in the script. It's definitely stuck as far as fans on Facebook and Twitter go – they love their Dr. Badass.

Aside from keeping an eye on Facebook and Twitter and attending *Supernatural* conventions, what have you been up to lately?

Just before my *Supernatural* episode, I did the remake of [the revenge horror movie] *I Spit on Your Grave*. We shot that just before Christmas, and that was really exciting. They're aiming for a Halloween

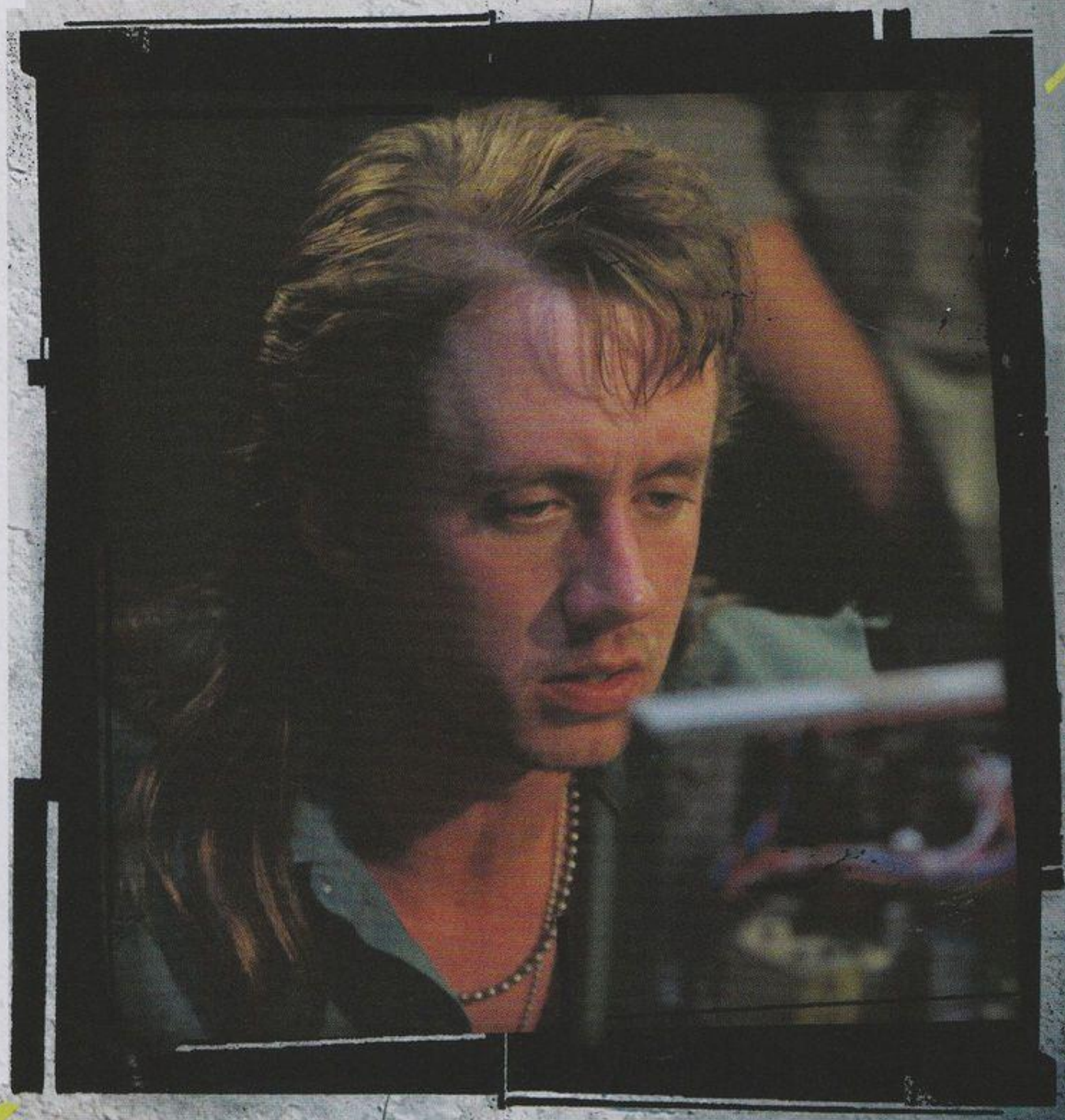


Photo: Lizz Sisson

release, and it's cool because it's already got buzz around it. The original is a cult classic, so it'll be interesting to see how the remake is received.

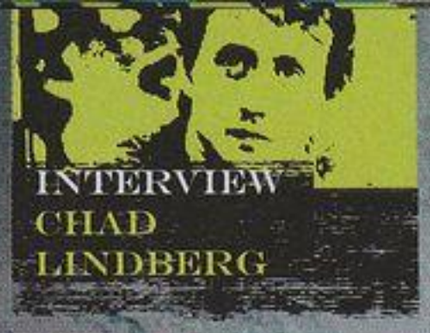
When you first started playing Ash, back in *Everybody Loves a Clown*, how did you come up with the unique personality you gave him?
With the dialogue, it just kind of felt natural. I'm kind of a wiry guy myself, so I went into the audition with my sleeveless flannel cut-off and I whipped open my shirt and went bare-chested, just kind of went right into it, and everyone in the room was laughing. I just had a feeling about Ash. Sometimes when you get material, you just know, you know it suits you. When I got the job I was really, really excited. He was a really cool character to play – quirky!

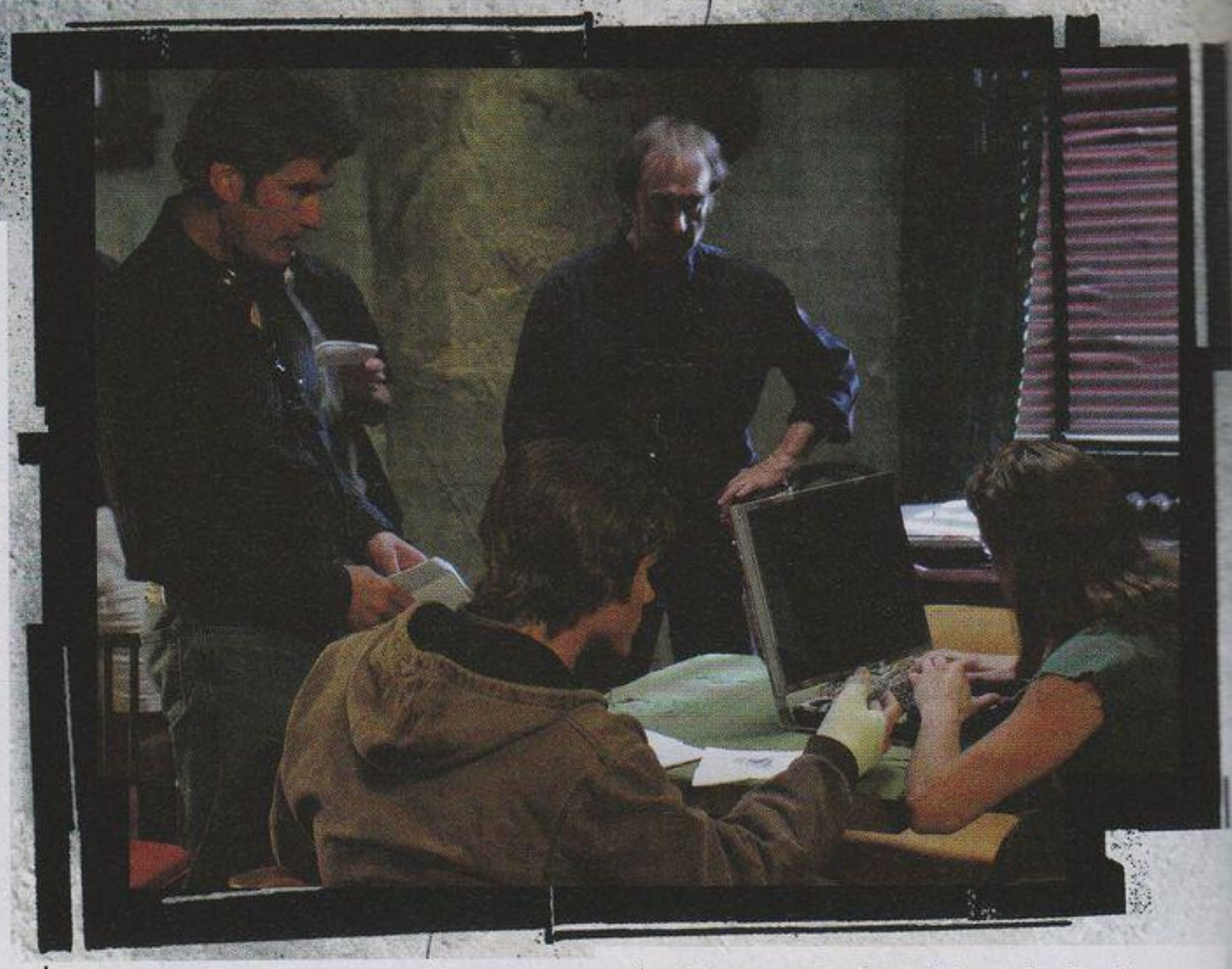
Ash was an MIT dropout and a computer genius. Do you have a techie background?
It's funny; I've kinda been typecast along the way as the computer tech guy, but I actually don't fit into that type at all myself. I'm not as computer savvy as I play, but those roles seem to find me.

Were you upset that they killed Ash off?
I was! It stung for a bit. Naturally, you don't want to hear that you've been killed off of a show. I was a little bummed, I'm not gonna lie, but at the same time it's the nature of the beast, the nature of the industry. I understood that and I held no grudges. The fans definitely gave Ash a life after death. I've done so many conventions and really got to meet these people and get to know them. I believe the fans have a huge part in why I'm back, so I'm very grateful for them. There is no other fan base like them, and they deserve major kudos.

You must have been surprised by the way Ash was brought back as a hacker of Heaven in *Dark Side of the Moon*?
I didn't know how they were going to bring me back, but I was just thrilled that they did. I thought that I was actually going to be alive and then they stuck to their guns and kept me dead. For me, Ash in Heaven was very appropriate, because the past three to four years have been the toughest of my life

"I just had a feeling about Ash. Sometimes when you get material, you just know, you know it suits you."





and I really had to reevaluate myself as an artist and as a person. I came through a lot of life changes and just recently things have started to change and I've got a little bit of heat behind me. Ash in Heaven is kind of fitting in terms of [the fact that] I'm in a great place now.

It's nice that Ash made it to Heaven, but would you have liked to have come back as a demon or a vampire or some other monster?
No, I like where I'm at. I'm kind of a spirit guide.

Maybe so, but are you disappointed that you never got out of Harvelle's and got to do some fighting and monster hunting yourself?
I appreciate that question! As a matter of fact, yes. I've never been out of the Roadhouse, and I always thought Ash was kind of a brawler. He definitely has some fight in him. I kinda wish they would've taken me out of the Roadhouse once or twice. But there's room for growth – maybe they'll bring me out on a little adventure in the future.

When you first meet up with the boys in *Dark Side of the Moon* you're wearing a Mexican wrestling costume. What went through your mind when you first saw that in the script?
I just thought it was a hilarious way to bring him back. I was a fan of wrestling back in the day, like Hulk Hogan and Jake 'The Snake' Roberts and all that kind of stuff, but I haven't seen wrestling since, or any Mexican wrestling, or even *Nacho Libre*.

Ash thinks "Bud, blood, and beer nuts" is the best smell in the world. What about you?
Well... hmm, I can't say *that*, so let's say, the smell of my dog. Yeah, I'm lovin' my dog; I'll go with that one.

The beer nuts line is fun, but what's your favorite line of Ash dialogue?
"Buenos dias, bitches!" Prior to that it was, "All business up front, party in the back." People remember that one, but I think "Buenos dias, bitches!" is gonna be the next Ash tagline.

What's your favorite Ash episode?
I would say my favorite episode is probably the first one I did in season two [*Everybody Loves a Clown*] and the one I just did in season five [*Dark Side of the Moon*]. I went through a lot of growth between then and now, so I think Ash is a little more confident, and edgier, and he's ready for action.

Are *you* ready for action? I mean, are you ready for encounters with the supernatural?
Absolutely. I've had many encounters with ghosts! I've woken up and heard my name being said out loud and stuff like that. I definitely believe in ghosts, and they're definitely around us. I really enjoy that stuff. I think if I wasn't an actor, I would probably be a paranormal investigator.

Since you believe it's real, what's your idea of Heaven?
That's a good question. I don't know! I'm hoping we get to see our loved ones and that Heaven's as exciting as we all hope it will be. I definitely think there's another side, but what it is, I don't know. I guess we're all going to find out someday...

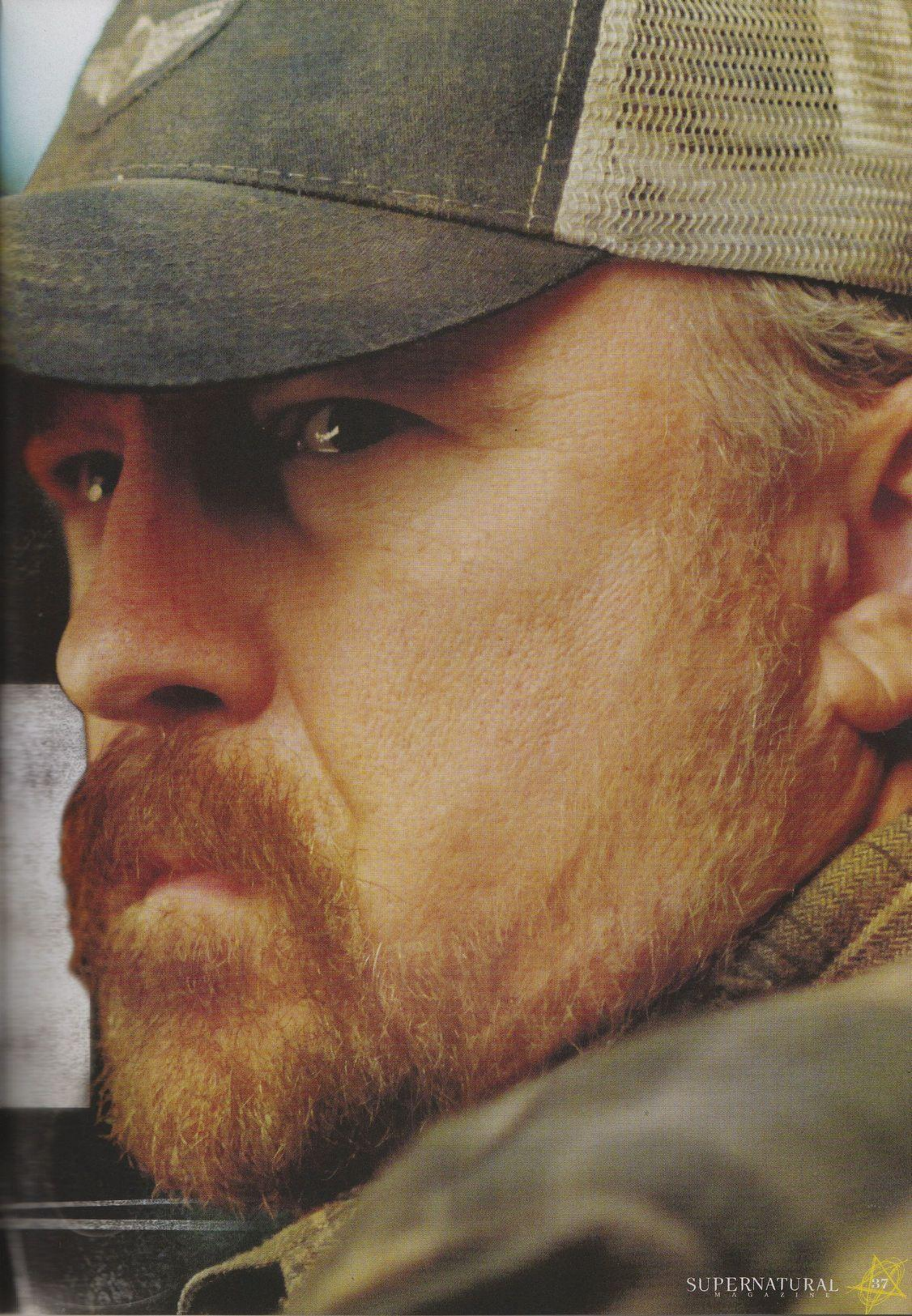
Any final thoughts on your *Supernatural* experiences?
I'm excited with being in Heaven, because they can't kill me again! There are so many places I can go. I think they left it open to bring me back at one point, so you never know!

> "I've never been out of the Roadhouse, and I always thought Ash was kind of a brawler. He definitely has some fight in him."

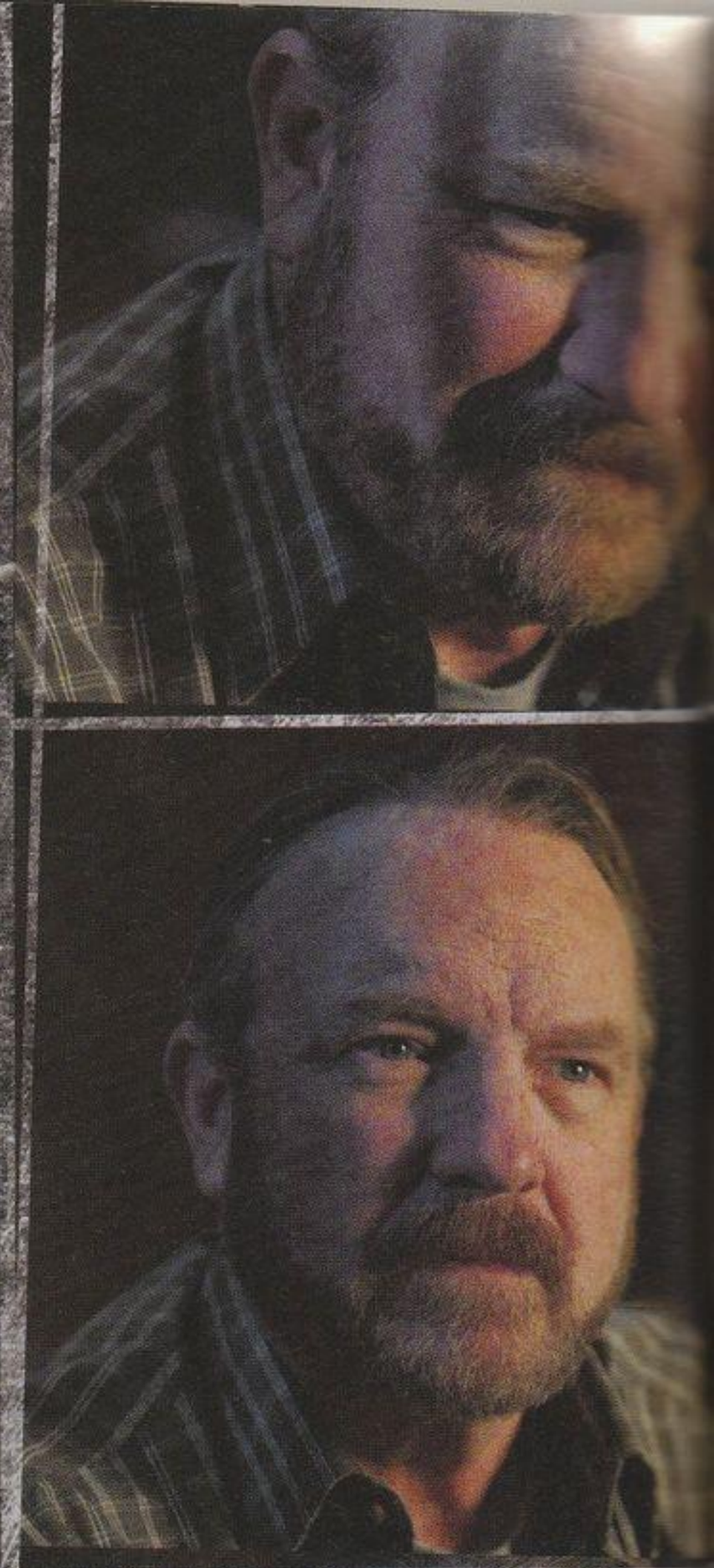
Supernatural's supporting characters don't often last long, but Bobby Singer's still going strong, even if he has been through the wars of late. Actor Jim Beaver spoke to *The Official Supernatural Magazine* about hearing himself dubbed in Spanish, kissing demons, and whether Bobby will ever carry an episode...

Words: Nicholas Knight

Soul Survivor



"DEAD MEN DON'T WEAR PLAID HAD HUGE EMOTIONAL CHALLENGES THAT WERE TERRIFICALLY DRAINING..."



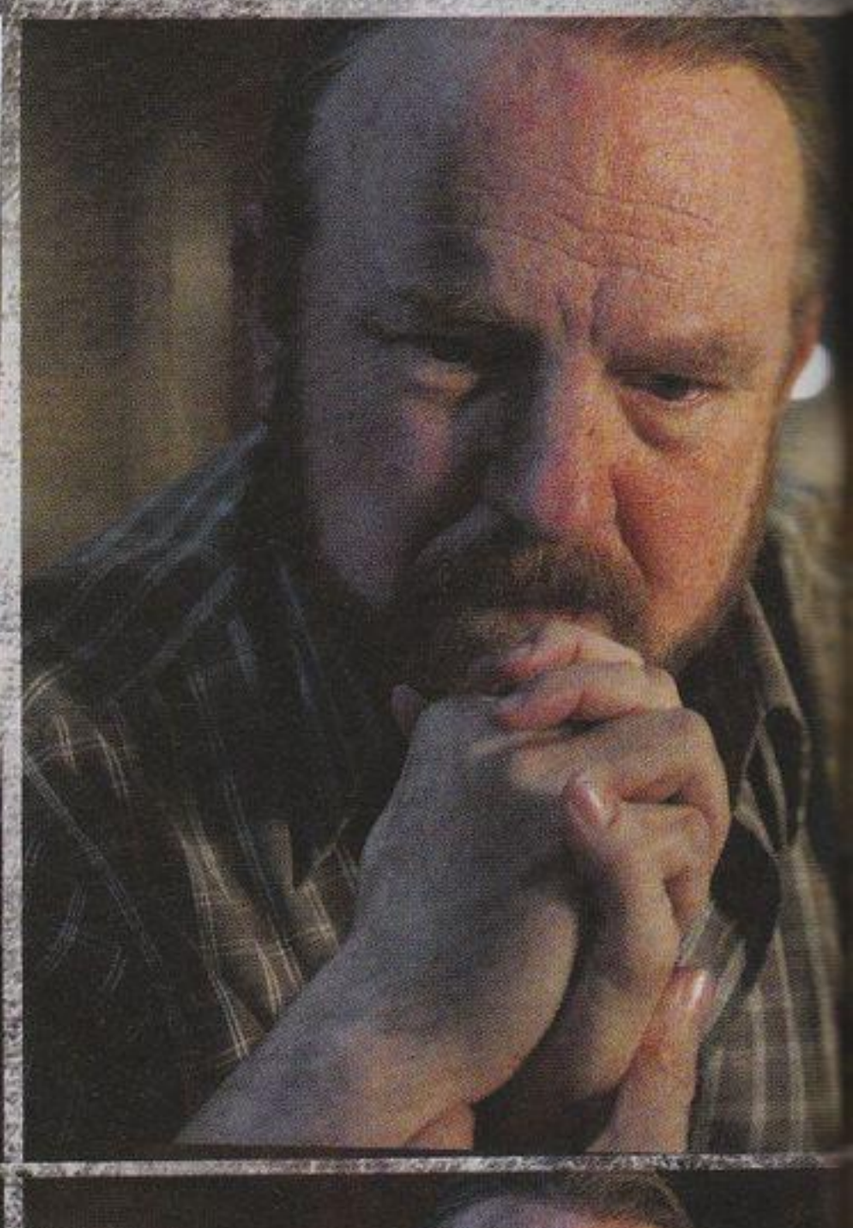
Poor Bobby. Season five did not treat him well. First he was possessed by a demon, then he lost his legs, then he was reunited with his dead wife only to have to kill her again, and to top it off he had his neck snapped by the Devil. Of course, it *was* the Apocalypse, after all – bad things were bound to happen. And Castiel *did* resurrect him, but he's still got that nasty little problem of Crowley holding onto his soul...

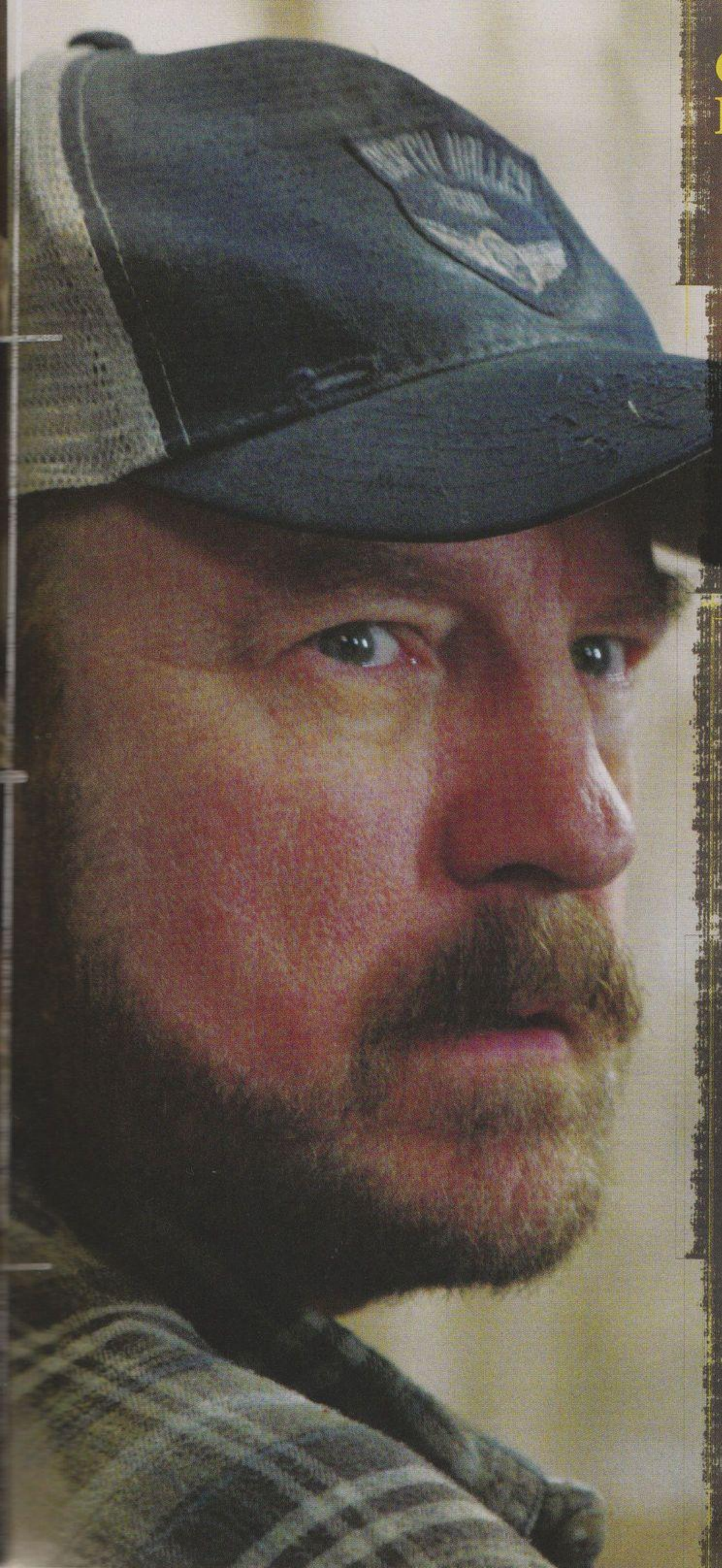
Seems like Bobby could use a vacation. But where would he go? A Hedonism resort in the Caribbean perhaps? Which brings to mind the unanswered question of what Bobby was doing in the Dominican Republic during the events of *Heaven and Hell*. Jim Beaver ponders the issue. "It's possible I was once planned [to be on] that episode," he says, "but I was a regular on *Harper's Island* that year, so there were a few times when I wasn't available. This might have been one. As to Dean's speculation about Bobby in a banana hammock – well, let's quote another tough character, Ethan Edwards in *The Searchers*: 'That'll be the day.'"

Okay, so the chances of Bobby jetting off for some fun in the sun are slim, but what about Beaver himself? Thanks to *Supernatural* fandom, he got to spend the hiatus between seasons five and six hopping from continent to continent. "I think I literally went around the world in 80 days," he muses. And he's probably right – Beaver was a guest at conventions in America, Australia, England, Germany, Italy, and Spain.

But he didn't have to leave home to interact with the fans. "I've been fairly active on social networking sites," says Beaver. "It's like I can tell when the show starts to air or starts to catch on in a [particular] country because all of a sudden I start getting Twitters from people. I bet I get two Twitters a day from somebody in Brazil. I don't mean the same person, just people. I'm learning Portuguese just from Twitter.

"I'm not terribly aware even of how the television audience functions in different countries. I'm mainly aware of it in the U.S. It's the only place I've





GETTING TO KNOW JIM

We asked Jim Beaver if there's anything about him – hobbies, favorite books or movies, favorite foods, et cetera – that the fans don't already know, and he responds, "I'm so active in social networking that I'm afraid most fans already know far too much about my personal predilections. But for the record, here are some of my favorites..."

MOVIES

1. *The Searchers* (1956)
2. *Ride the High Country* (1962)
3. *Farewell My Lovely* (1975)
4. *Yojimbo* (1962)
5. *Seven Samurai* (1954)
6. *Under Fire* (1983)
7. *Casablanca* (1942)
8. *The Grapes of Wrath* (1940)
9. *Steamboat Bill Jr.* (1926)
10. *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance* (1962)

ACTORS

1. John Wayne
2. Laurence Olivier
3. Robert Mitchum
4. Buster Keaton
5. Toshiro Mifune
6. Groucho Marx
7. Randolph Scott
8. Gary Cooper
9. Humphrey Bogart
10. Curly Howard

ACTRESSES

1. Gail Russell
2. Katharine Hepburn
3. Priscilla Lane
4. Felicity Kendal
5. Vanessa Redgrave
6. Jodi Thelen
7. Jennifer Jason Leigh
8. Bette Davis
9. Olivia de Havilland
10. Marion Cotillard

BOOKS

1. *Wanderer* by Sterling Hayden
2. *Look Homeward Angel* by Thomas Wolfe
3. *Farewell My Lovely* by Raymond Chandler
4. *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* by Robert Pirsig
5. *Diá de los Muertos* by Kent Harrington

BANDS and SINGERS

1. The Ventures
2. The Beatles
3. The Eagles
4. Dropkick Murphys
5. Phil Ochs
6. Rick Nelson
7. Yul Brynner
8. The Dresden Dolls
9. The Four Seasons
10. Bob Dylan

CONDIMENTS

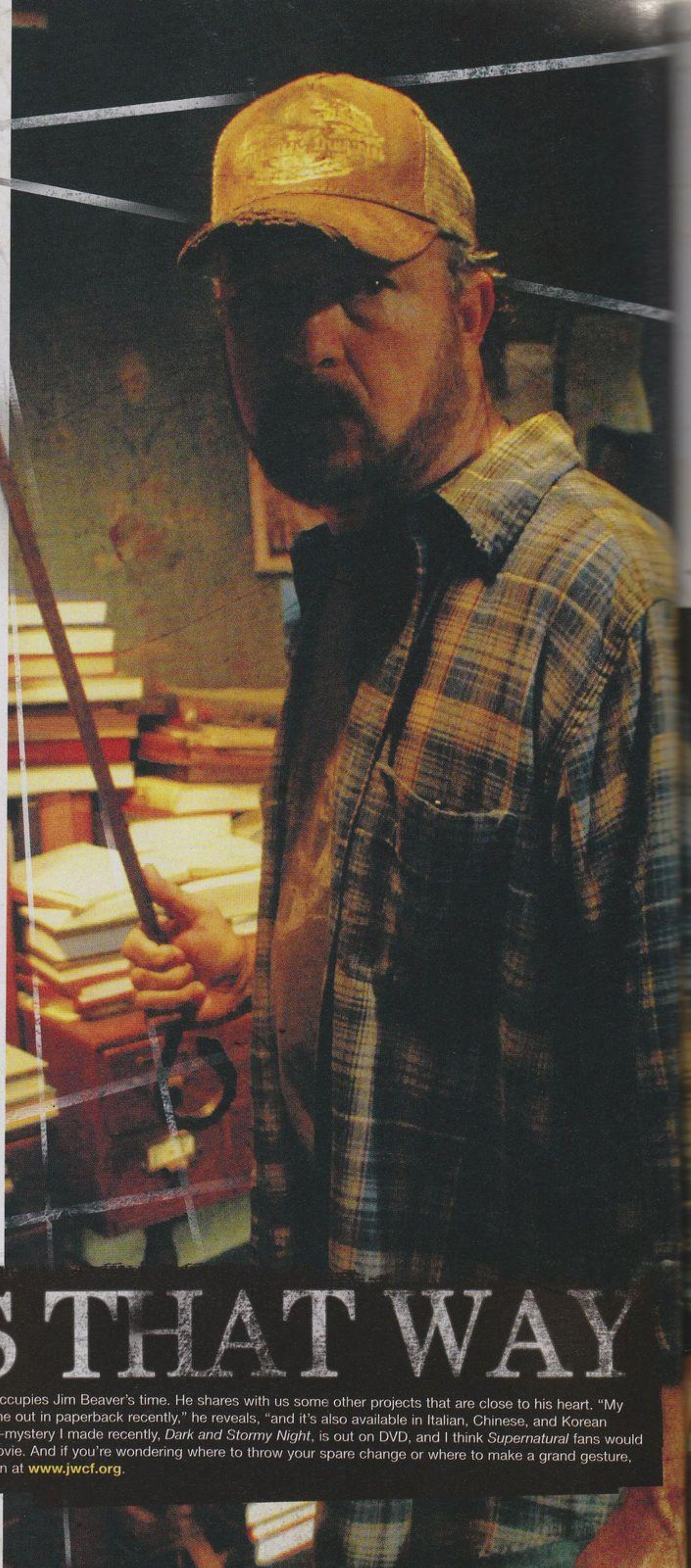
1. Miracle Whip
2. Nutella
3. Ketchup
4. Horseradish
5. Butterscotch topping

watched television consistently and the only place I've talked to people who watch television consistently. I don't have a real strong image of what we're up against in other countries, what our competition is, what options people have for picking a show. All I know is it's amazing and delightful to realize that [they're picking *Supernatural*]."

Even in countries where English isn't predominant. For instance, *Supernatural* is dubbed in countries like Germany, Italy, and Spain. "I've seen some shows I did that were dubbed and it's great," Beaver comments. "I saw the first show I worked on with Bob Singer years ago, *Reasonable Doubts*, in Mexico, and the guy who was doing me was great – he made me sound like a real man, which I thought was an improvement. And here's the thing. If they weren't dubbing us, they wouldn't be watching us. I figure as long as they're looking at me, I don't care what I sound like."

It might just be a matter of time until the show is dubbed in Enochian, but Beaver doesn't see that happening. "My late wife was on one of the *Star Trek* shows, and I used to go to fan conventions with her, and guys would come up in costume and refuse to speak to her except in Klingon. We don't get that at *Supernatural* conventions." Instead, he says, "The fan conventions are so much fun, the only thing I've ever done, I think, that approaches the fun of acting. I meet so many wonderful people, and they are so incredibly kind to me, so giving and warm, that a single convention leaves me emotionally fueled for months."

Beaver has had at least one strange fan encounter, however. "The weirdest



LIFE'S THAT WAY

Supernatural's not the only thing that occupies Jim Beaver's time. He shares with us some other projects that are close to his heart. "My book, *Life's That Way: A Memoir*, came out in paperback recently," he reveals, "and it's also available in Italian, Chinese, and Korean editions. A wonderful comedy murder-mystery I made recently, *Dark and Stormy Night*, is out on DVD, and I think *Supernatural* fans would be extremely responsive to this particular movie. And if you're wondering where to throw your spare change or where to make a grand gesture, I support the John Wayne Cancer Foundation at **www.jwcf.org**.

question I was ever asked at a con," he relates, "was some bizarre thing this one young lady was asking each of the guests, something about having a body part stapled to a table and how we would prefer to have it freed. Pretty much everybody, actors and fans, did a triple take over that one."

Fortunately, none of his *Supernatural* scripts have called for Beaver to rip any body parts free of a table, but one of his season five episodes did call for him to rip open some of Bobby's emotional wounds. "*Dead Men Don't Wear Plaid* had huge emotional challenges that were terrifically draining and which forced me to dwell for long periods in parts of my own experience that I normally prefer not to linger in; elements of loss and mourning," he recalls. "But as an actor, those are rich gifts to be able to bring to a scene, so I welcomed them and was grateful to be able to have them in my tool kit when I needed them."

Beaver previously told *The Official Supernatural Magazine* that Bobby needed a hot girlfriend, so perhaps the

"FIVE YEARS ON THE SHOW AND THE ONLY MAKE-OUT SCENE I'VE EVER HAD IS WITH A GUY. NOT HAPPY."

"THE WHEELCHAIR BROUGHT ME A LOT OF GREAT DRAMATIC SCENES I'D NEVER HAVE HAD, BUT IT CAUSED BOBBY TO BE LEFT BEHIND FOR TOO MANY ADVENTURES."

writers answered his wish by pairing him up with Carrie Anne Fleming in the role of Bobby's wife, Karen Singer. Then again, maybe they cheated by turning her into a monster... "They didn't cheat," Beaver believes. "No, they gave me great dramatic stuff to play, which was a gigantic gift. I loved, loved, loved working with Carrie Anne Fleming. Do I wish we'd had some physically intimate scenes? Yesssssss! But that's not really how TV works, is it? Five years on the show and the only make-out scene I've ever had is with a guy. Not happy."

Beaver, of course, is referring to Mark Sheppard, who he had to kiss when sealing Bobby's deal with the Crossroads Demon, Crowley.

"I wasn't surprised at the deal," he states. "It's great plotting. And I expect great plotting on this show."

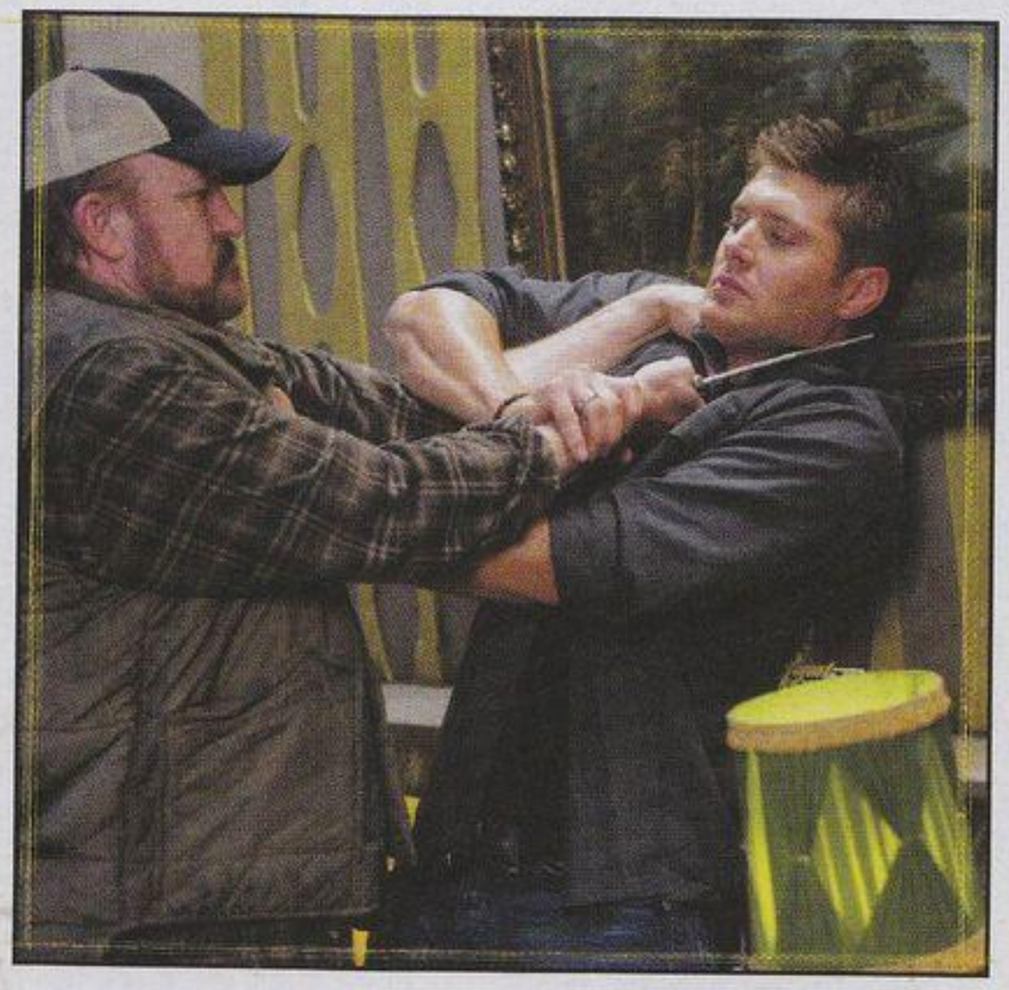
Part of that great plotting was a clever way to get Bobby out of the wheelchair he'd been in most of the season. "The wheelchair brought me a lot of great dramatic scenes I'd never have had," notes Beaver, "but technically it's difficult to work with smoothly, and it caused Bobby to be left behind for too many adventures. So I'm happy to be out of it." We are talking about a demon deal here, though, so Bobby might have to give up his legs again if he wants his soul back...

"I have no idea what the repercussions will be in season six," says Beaver. "I don't have any knowledge of anything relating to season six!" Indeed, Beaver won't even speculate about season six. When asked for predictions and hopes for what will happen to Bobby, he says, "None of either. I've no idea what's in store for season six, and I await the revelation without expecting or wanting anything. Except make-out scenes. With women."

There *is* actually something Beaver would like to see Bobby do in the future, and if it includes make-out scenes with hot women, all the better. "Just out of actor's ego, I'd like to see Bobby carry an episode sometime," he declares. "See if the audience would sit still for a Bobby-centric episode where the boys are lost and he's got to find them, something like that. I doubt it will ever happen, since the hunksters are the draw on this show. But purely for my own amusement, it would be fun to do something like that."

For fans wondering what Beaver does for amusement off-camera, he elaborates.

"Not much goes on behind the scenes for me," he concludes. "I don't hover around the set usually when I'm not in a scene, preferring to go to my trailer and either relax or study lines. But that's not to suggest it's not a warm and inviting set. I'm so terribly fond of everyone I work with. It's a blessing to come to work on this show, and I will miss this gang like brothers and sisters when it finally ends. I just hope it's not anytime soon."



INTERVIEW
STEVEN
WILLIAMS

Words: Bryan Cairns

Hunting High and Low

We first saw him with a whisky in his hand, but now we're more likely to see veteran hunter Rufus Turner with a gun out in the field. *The Official Supernatural Magazine* caught up with actor Steven Williams after *Weekend at Bobby's* to find out more about doing stunts, being directed by Jensen, and why Rufus and Bobby are like grumpy old men...

***The Official Supernatural Magazine*: How well versed were you with *Supernatural* before being cast as Rufus Turner in season three's *Time Is On My Side*?**

Steven Williams: Not at all. It's really, really strange. Going on a tangent, a good buddy of mine follows television, and when I auditioned for Mr. X on *The X-Files*, he asked if I had ever seen the show. I told him no. He responded that it was going to be a big hit and that I was going to be a central, interesting character. The

same thing happened with *Supernatural*. I had never seen the series. It was really cool, and I love recurring roles. It's one of my favorite things to do where there's a little mystery. I like reveals.

Rufus certainly didn't give Dean a warm welcome when he first met him. From that introduction, what was your general impression of him?

Well, I didn't know what was going to happen. I thought this is a guy who has a lot of wisdom, but with a possible alcohol problem. I never expected to be out in the field, because I thought I was a retired hunter as opposed to active. When the second episode [*Good God, Y'all*] came out and they actually put me in the field, it started getting really exciting for me.

So you embraced those physical elements?

Exactly! Once they made me an active hunter, that was the fun stuff. They put a gun in my hand and let me

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“ONCE THEY MADE ME AN ACTIVE HUNTER, THAT WAS THE FUN STUFF. THEY PUT A GUN IN MY HAND AND LET ME KILL SOME DEMONS!”

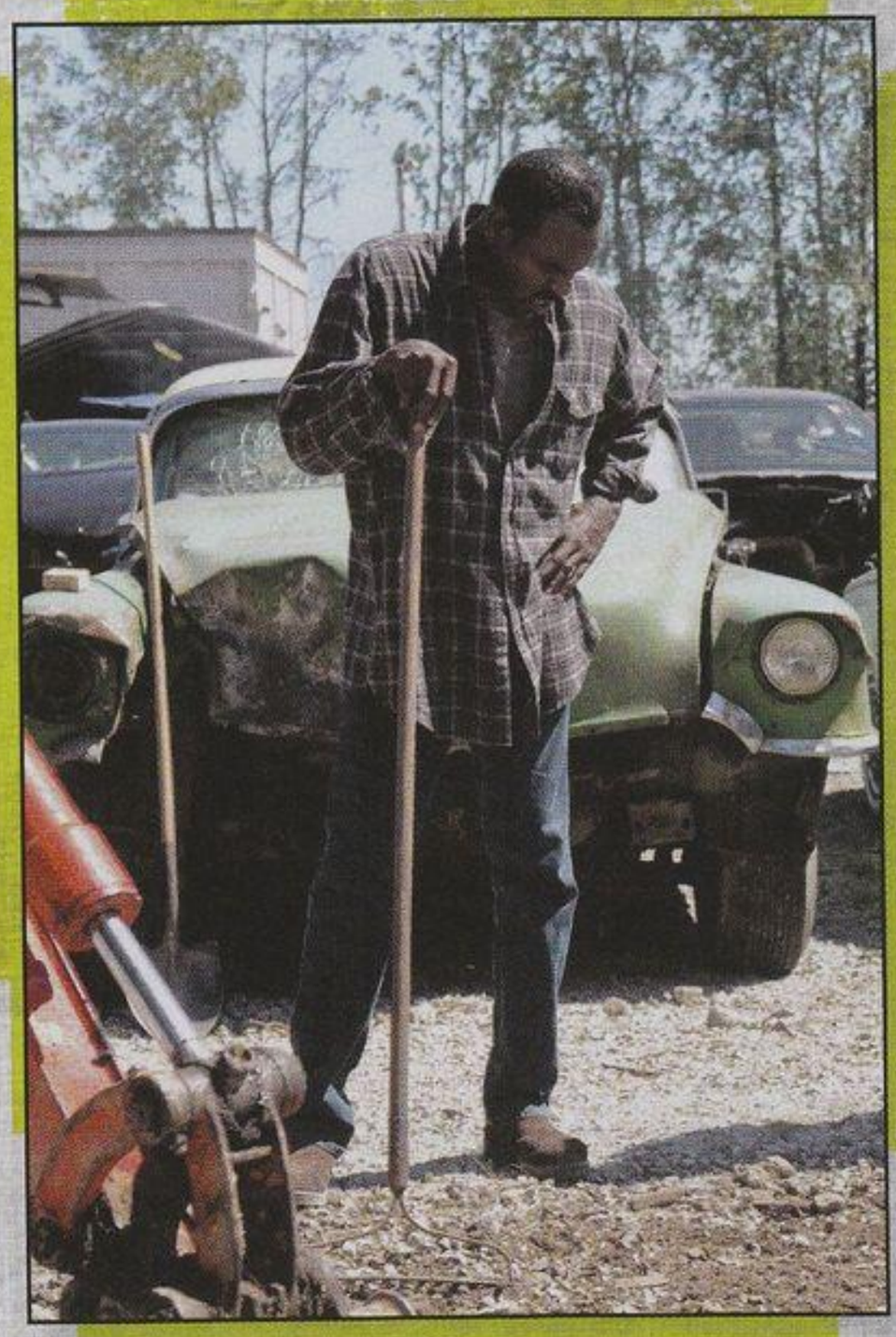
kill some demons! It was “Alright! Let’s rock and roll!”

In *Good God Y’All*, was that actually you and Jensen Ackles trading punches?

Yeah, that was us. The only thing that wasn’t was when the stunt guy came through the window for me. Otherwise, the rest was me, which I love. Even as old as I am, I still love the physical stuff from my *L.A. Heat* cop [show] days. I like doing those stunts... the macho stuff. The testosterone overflows until you end up on worker’s comp!

Based on those two episodes, did you get a sense of what kind of hunter Rufus was?

Rufus is good. He’s an expert, he’s been there and done that and seen practically everything. Rufus has a certain cynicism about it all. It’s only been three episodes now, so I really haven’t had a chance to totally get him. He’s still growing for me, which is why I hope they continue to use this guy. You always knew when X appeared with the trenchcoat on, so I even wanted to create a look for Rufus. In *Weekend at Bobby’s*, I have this little goatee going. I just want to create something for this guy that’s distinctive and make it funny, amusing, and entertaining.



Given his attitude, do you consider Rufus a reluctant ally or a friend?

I think of Rufus as a friend who wants to protect his own ass. He’s a survivor. He’ll do anything to help save the world, but he wants to save himself as well. There’s a certain amount of cynicism that goes with that. He’s a little bit of a cowboy with some gung-ho, “jump in, do anything, go anywhere” mantra, but he wants to come out of it alive. Not too much fazes him either. He’s seen and done it all. Even the boys play it that way – they’ve been around the block too.

In *Weekend at Bobby’s*, what brings Rufus literally pounding on Bobby’s door?

The fact that he has this body he needs to get rid of. Rufus is kind of a renegade too. He may have a little bit of screw-up in him and, like

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WILLIAMS

Bobby said, Rufus messed up. Bobby is the go-to-guy. I didn't know about Bobby's phone gig until this particular episode. He has all this FBI stuff set up where people call him and he verifies who they are. That's what the whole visit to Bobby is about. Rufus messed up and needs some help. Plus, we don't ever see the demon I killed in our region. I have this body on my hands, so what hell am I going to do with it?

It's ironic considering Rufus quips that Bobby is always sitting on his butt, but turns to him anyway.

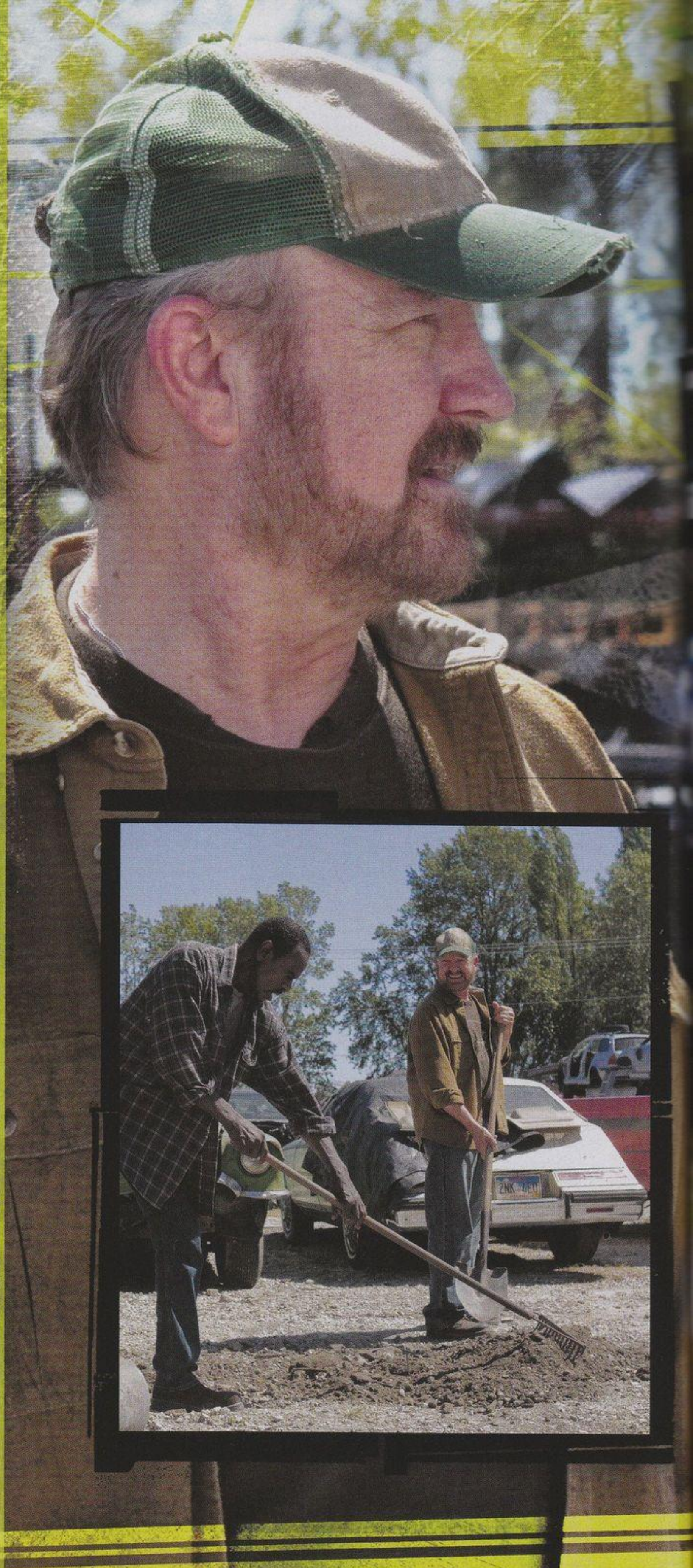
When I asked Jensen how we were going to play that, he said "As two grumpy old men." These two guys are the veterans. There may be some friendly competition going on between them. The interaction with Jim's character is one of the best things the writers could have done. They probably think they know everything, and are such independent spirits.

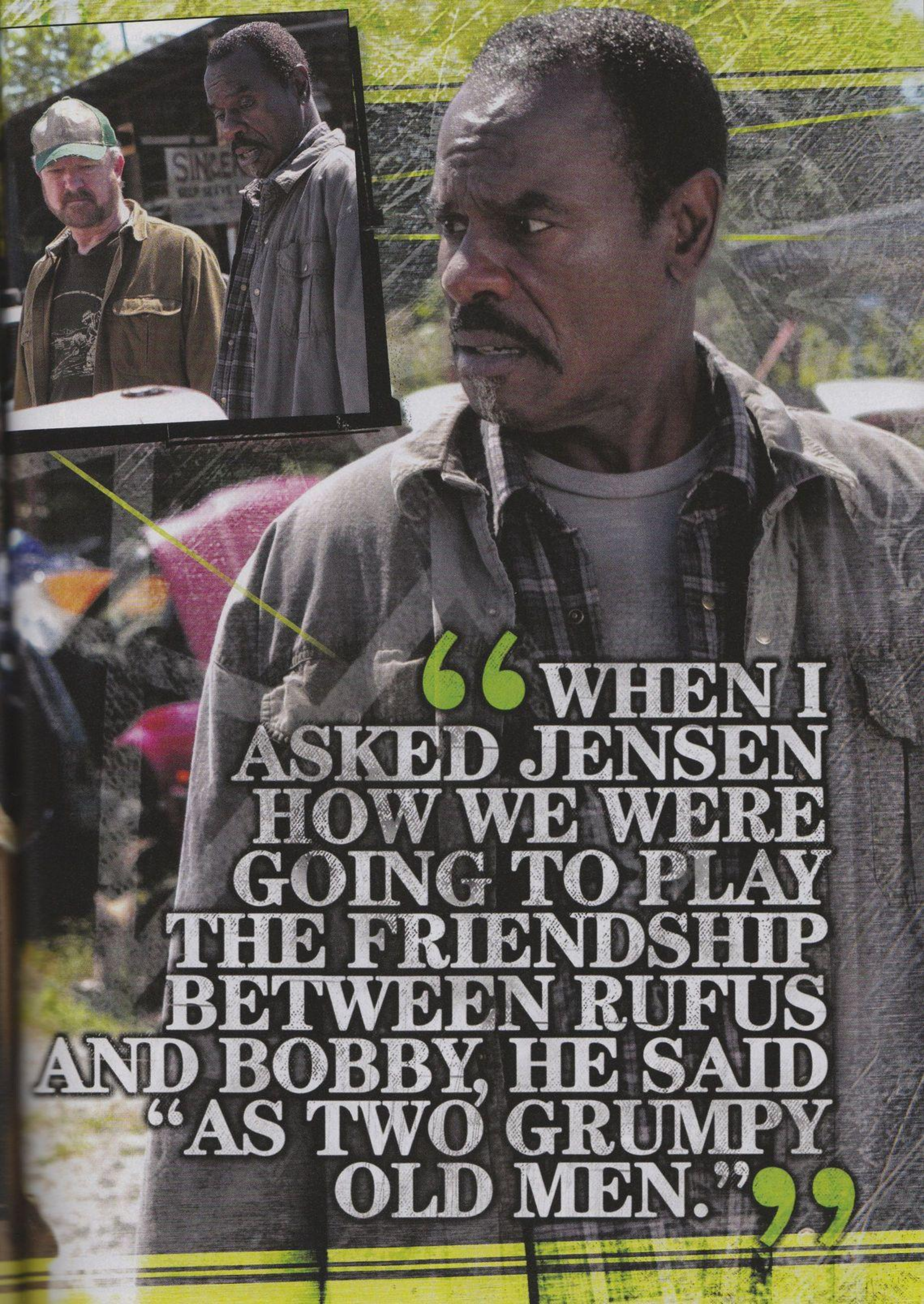
What's it been like sharing all those meaty scenes opposite Jensen, Jared, and Jim?

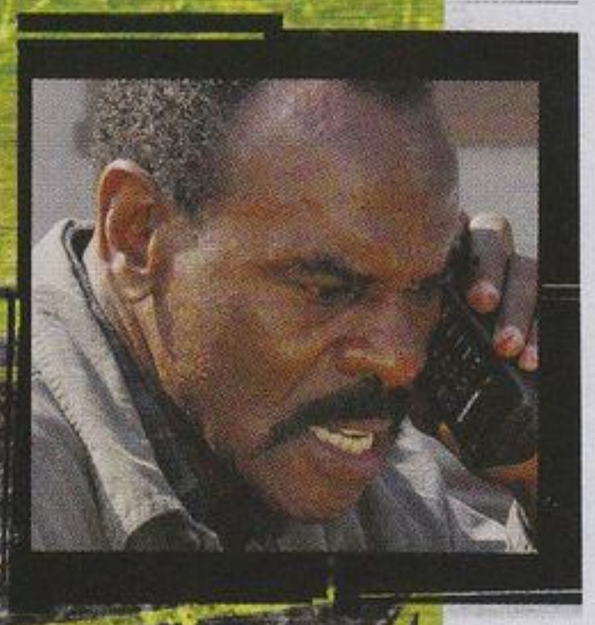
It's been wonderful. They welcomed me with open arms. In Vancouver, a lot of guys are aware that this is like a home for me. I lived there for five years, owned a place, had two hit shows there with *21 Jump Street* and *The X-Files*, so they're familiar with me. It was a nice welcome, and they're familiar with my amount of popularity. It's been great working with them. These two boys have star [quality], and Jim is just a wonderful actor. To bounce off these guys was a lot of fun.

How was the set with Jensen stepping behind the camera instead of being in front of it?

It's always fun when an actor directs another actor. Actors understand what we're trying to do. In Jensen's case, he tends to let the actors go. I'm a director's actor. There are ways I want to give it a shot, but in the final analysis, I'm going to give you something that makes you happy. I want to combine that with what my vision of the character is. If we can come to a happy medium about what the director and actor wants, I'm a happy camper. It's always a little bit better when another actor directs, because he understands




SINGER
“WHEN I ASKED JENSEN HOW WE WERE GOING TO PLAY THE FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN RUFUS AND BOBBY, HE SAID “AS TWO GRUMPY OLD MEN.””



where I'm coming from. In the end, it's a collaboration.

What with *The X-Files* and *Jason Goes to Hell*, this isn't your first encounter with the unknown. What's so enjoyable about doing these genre projects?

Because of the possibilities of there being so much reality in those situations. We don't really know a lot about UFOS, extraterrestrials, mysteries, demons, and the occult. For me, what's fun about it is the possibility that these things actually exist, or are as real as our everyday life.

Having no back-story gives Rufus endless potential. What else would you like to see explored?

I don't know yet. I'd just like to see more of this guy. I'd like to see him in action doing the hero rescue thing.

A lot of hunters end up in the grave.

Yes, that's happened before. That's not a good sign. If it happens, I just hope it's a noble, heroic death. And there's always the possibility of coming back. What I'm really interested in is creating a character that the fans will love and want to see, which will hopefully prevent any demise!

"RUFUS IS KIND OF A RENEGADE TOO. HE MAY HAVE A LITTLE BIT OF SCREW UP IN HIM AND, LIKE BOBBY SAID, HE MESSED UP."